- **Entertainment / A30**

Ex-LVN stars race to studio for film copies

- **Business / B1**

Gov't defers roadshow; peso still weak

- **Metro / A21**

3 face sedition raps in QC for anti-GMA posters

- **News / A2**

Bishop lines up 2 more 'jueteng' witnesses

- **Sports / A25**

NBA finals: Pistons stop Spurs at home

Mobile phones ring: Hello! Hello! Garci!

HI-TECH ANG SIRAAN!

By Armand N. Nocum and Jocelyn R. Uy

WHAT the government tried to stop from spreading in the form of compact discs will soon be in the hands of mobile phone users.

MOBILE/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

GMA to visit H'Kong to show RP promise

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo plans to visit Hong Kong next week in the first of a series of foreign trips to drum up investment in the Philippines and to show that the country still has promise despite opposition moves to unseat her.

"It is in and out," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said of Ms Arroyo's whirlwind trip.

GMA/ A9

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Thursday, June 16, 2005 ★★ 44 pages 3 sections Vol. 20 No. 188 P18

website: www.inq7.net

House asks GMA: Comment on tape

Lawmakers OK joint probe of 5 committees

By Philip C. Tubeza and Michael Lim Ubac

THE SCANDAL of the tape yesterday went into higher gear with the House of Representatives, the religious and youth sectors, and retired military officials beefing up the clamor for President Macapagal-Arroyo to speak up on the matter.

After an executive session lasting more than two hours, the House decided to ask Ms Arroyo to formally comment on the controversial audio tape purportedly showing her as having rigged the 2004 presidential election.

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of the planned joint investigation on the tape scandal, said the letter to the President and other people whose conversations were allegedly tapped might be sent today.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez called on Ms Arroyo to confirm whether the voice in the audio tape was hers in order to save the House "the trouble and anguish of establishing what is authentic or not."

Golez, chair of the House committee on defense and Ms Arroyo's former national security adviser, recognized that it was within Ms Arroyo's right "not to comment on an illegally obtained wiretap."

"From the legal point of view, that may be correct. But since the voice sounds like her voice and this was earlier confirmed by the press secretary, I believe that she must now make a statement on this and level with the people," he said.

Retired Col. Mariano Santiago, chair of the ethics committee of the Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association (PMAAA), said Ms Arroyo should say once and for all whether the voice in the supposedly incriminating phone conversations was hers.

Unless the President clarifies the

HOUSE/ A8

Y-PAD
Youth Power Against Destabilization
We, the unified youth leaders
It is our future and welfare
We ask them, if they truly believe
against government officials
people's trust. Let the constitutional
work. Let them face our justice system.

REM ZAMORA

A STUDENT signs her name on a poster of Youth Power Against Destabilization (Y-PAD), an organization of student councils in Metro Manila. Y-PAD denounces attempts by "power-hungry leeches" to weaken people's trust in government but says the President must explain.

Military welcomes spy probe

By Dona Pazzibugan and Michael Lim Ubac

A DAY after a lawmaker raised the likelihood that the military intelligence chief ordered the bugging of President Macapagal-Arroyo's telephone, the Armed Forces yesterday announced it welcomed an inquiry into a possible military involvement in the controversy.

Rep. Roilo Golez said Tuesday that Rear Admiral Tirso Danga could be a "central character" in the wiretapping drama. Golez is chair of the House committee on defense and Ms Arroyo's former security adviser.

"The AFP will support any in-

MILITARY/ A7

NBI charges Ong with inciting to sedition

By Armand N. Nocum

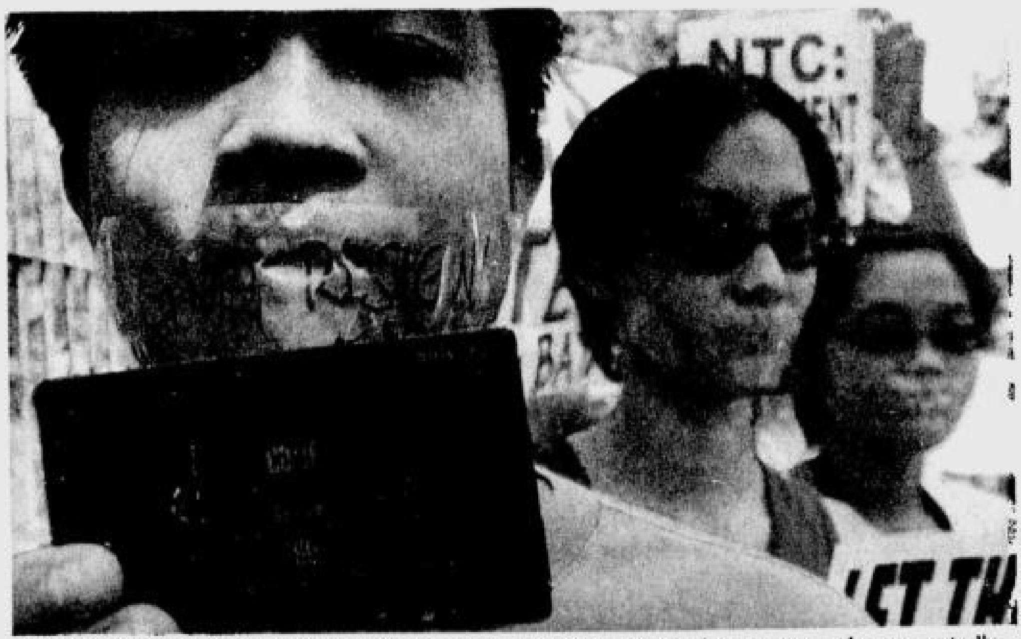
A CHARGE of inciting to sedition was filed yesterday against Samuel Ong in connection with his accusations that President Macapagal Arroyo cheated in last year's elections, but the justice department said the former deputy chief of the National Bureau of Investigation did not face immediate arrest.

State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco said a subpoena would be served against Ong at his Novaliches home and he would have 10 days to respond to the charge, which carries a penalty of up to six years imprisonment. During this period, Ong will not be subject to arrest.

Ong's whereabouts has not been established.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the case of inciting to sedition was just the first of sever-

NBI CHARGES/ A7



MEMBERS of a militant group hold copies of an alleged wiretapped telephone conversation purportedly showing evidence of election cheating in a protest in front of the NTC building in Quezon City.

Respect GMA silence, Bunye tells people

By Gil Cabacungan Jr., Marlon Ramos and Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's lips will continue to be sealed, and Malacañang is asking the public to abide by her earlier declared position that she would not be provoked into commenting on the authenticity of the controversial audio tape.

"That is the view of our President, and I hope that we respect her stand to enforce the law," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in an interview over dzBB radio.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita reiterated the President's stand after the House decided to start hearings on the alleged wiretapped conversations and to seek a formal comment from her on the issue.

"We should go by the rule of law. We can't just give in to whatever everybody wants even if it is against the law," he said.

With the Catholic Church still to present a unified position on the raging scandals on alleged election fraud and "jueteng" payoffs, the President sought the support of El Shaddai—and got it.

"I am hoping that Brother Mike [Velarde] and the Yahweh El Shaddai, and the children of Yahweh El Shaddai, will help me the same way it did in the past election, to help me in achieving a one Philippines," Ms Arroyo said in Bacoor, Cavite.

It was her first out-of-town trip since weathering the Independence Day protests, to award land ownership certificates to and recognize former barangay captains in the province.

Velarde, whose 8-million-strong Catholic charismatic group backed Ms Arroyo in the May 2004 election, was a special guest at the event.

"We still support the President. As long as she is the President, she must be supported. That is our position," Velarde told the INQUIRER.

Speaking before some 3,000 people who attended the inauguration of the Mayor Arse-

RESPECT/ A8

REM ZAMORA

FR. QUIRINO Glodaviza Glorioso, the oldest priest in the Philippines, is surrounded by friends and admirers on his deathbed.

Father Lolo dies amid turmoil

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINES' oldest priest, Fr. Quirino Glorioso, has died at the age of 102, probably still dismayed over how he had seen the country turn from bad to worse during his lifetime.

Glorioso had often blamed the country's deteriorating condition on what he called a "crisis in leadership," according to Msgr. Jerry Bitoon, his "caregiver" in the last eight years.

FATHER/ A8

TALE OF THE TAPE

Kidnapping tied to poll fraud

By Fe Zamora

IF FOUND to be genuine, the controversial tape purportedly containing the conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an official of the Commission on Elections shows that truth comes in God's own time, former Comelec Chair Harriet Demetriou said yesterday.

"It's karma. It shows that there is God," said Demetriou, who was accused by the Arroyo camp of kidnapping an election official in Basilan at the height of the canvassing of votes in June last year.

Demetriou, one of the lead counsels of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., along with Rufus Rodriguez, was accused by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) of the Philippine National Police of "kidnapping" Hadja Rashma Hali and her children.

The CIDG said Demetriou and Rufus held Sali against her will from May 31 to June 9 to coax her into testifying against the Arroyo administration on election irregularities in Tipo-tipo, Basilan.

Ms Arroyo's lawyer during the 2001 presidential election, Querubin Makalintal, refused to comment on the Sali case. "It's going to be awkward for me to comment on this because I am no longer the President's lawyer," he told the INQUIRER.

He said his lawyer-client relationship with Ms Arroyo ended when the Supreme Court junked the petition filed by Poe's widow to substitute for her husband in the electoral fraud complaint filed against the President.

The taped conversation, allegedly between Ms Arroyo and a man whom opposition politicians have identified as Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano showed that the kidnapping of Sali was part of a plot to rig the results of the national elections.

The wiretapping purportedly

KIDNAPPING/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE PDI RESEARCH/06/16/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FrontPage

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Bishop lines up 2 more witnesses

By Christian V. Esguerra

LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN Archbishop Oscar Cruz yesterday said he would present two new witnesses when the Senate resumes its "jueteng" hearings next week.

Cruz said one of the witnesses, a male, is expected to "cement" the previous testimonies of four other witnesses earlier presented before the Senate.

"He will consolidate and confirm the testimonies," the crusading prelate told reporters. Cruz refused to say if the new witness was also a former gambling operator like Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor. He also declined to reveal details about the other witness, also a male.

He said the other witness knew the four others and has dealt with them on several occasions in a region considered a hotbed of jueteng.

Cruz refused to say if the witness would also implicate top officials of the government.

Representatives Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo of Pampanga and Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo of Negros Occidental were both implicated by witness Sandra Cam.

"Let's just say that he knows a lot and he knows about the things that the other witnesses have told the Senate," he said.

Cam, one of at least eight witnesses under the bishop's protection, had earlier admitted collecting and delivering money for retired police general Restituto Mosqueda, erstwhile Bicol regional director.

She claimed to have personally delivered jueteng money to the two Arroyos right at the House of Representatives.

Witness' confirmation

Cruz said his new witness who listened to the testimonies of the earlier witnesses confirmed to him that Cam and company were telling the truth. He had purportedly been involved, in one way or another, in the circumstances the witnesses had divulged to senators.

As this developed, House leaders led by Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Assistant Majority Leader Antonio Cerilles agreed with former Sen. Jovito Salonga that a congressional investigation must always be conducted in aid of legislation, and to forestall charges that partisan politics may turn the proceedings into a tool for destabilization.

In an earlier statement, Salonga cited that in a past investigation by the House committee on good government, which he chaired, the House adopted a few basic rules of fairness in relation to the Stonehill case and subsequent cases.

Reputable counsel

Salonga said these included the hiring of a reputable counsel of integrity and competence to help the committee screen witnesses who offer or are scheduled to testify; the holding of an executive session first in case testimony or evidence was undisputably harmful to a person's reputation; nonscheduling of a public hearing if a piece of evidence is not corroborated by some other evidence; the holding of a public hearing if the evidence is justified; and giving the defendant a chance to reply at the earliest opportunity after the witness testified against a person.

Meanwhile, the counsel of Mikey Arroyo yesterday said new libel charges will be filed against Cam after she revealed on television the other night that people close to Arroyo and his uncle Ignacio Arroyo had tried to bribe her to withdraw her testimony in the Senate.

In a statement, lawyer Grace Maduranente said they were now getting a tape of the episode of ABS-CBN's show "Pipol" which featured Ms Cam.

"After we review the tape and get an exact transcription of her new false and malicious imputations against Congressman Arroyo, we will be filing a fresh count of criminal libel against Ms Cam," said Maduramente.

Arroyo earlier filed a P5 million libel suit against Cam for her claim that both Arroyo congressmen had received jueteng payola.

CHARM OFFENSIVE

President Macapagal-Arroyo exchanges pleasantries with El Shaddai leader Brother Mike Velarde during yesterday's inauguration of the newly constructed Mayor Arsenio Castillo Coliseum at the Camella Homes Springville City in Molino, Bacoor, Cavite. The event was also attended by Trade Secretary Juan Santos and Bacoor Mayor Jessie Castillo. The President sought the support of the religious, particularly the El Shaddai, at the time when she and her family is being buffeted by scandals involving "jueteng" payola and election fraud.

PATRICK CASTILLO/PCPO

PRIVATE CITIZEN

Garcillano stripped of immunity

By Jerome Aning

UNLESS reappointed to the Commission on Elections, Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano would lose his constitutional immunity and will be treated as a private citizen in possible investigations into his alleged involvement to rig the 2004 poll results.

This was the assessment of Commissioner Florentino Tuason when asked yesterday by reporters about the plans of the elections office to probe Garcillano.

Tuason said the proceedings to be conducted against Garcillano would be administrative in nature and would only be possible as long as his colleague remains a member of the Comelec.

"He will be investigated with regards to ethical conduct but we don't know yet if he was reappointed," Tuason explained, adding that Garcillano's fate in the commission rests with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr., on the other hand, asked the public not to condemn the entire elections office.

"Assuming that it is true, the Comelec should not be condemned," Abalos said. "The alleged act is by one commissioner alone. The Comelec is not the voice of one person."

According to Abalos, the investigation of Garcillano would begin once the National Telecommunications Commission completes its study of the controversial wiretapped conversation and determines its authenticity and the identities of the persons in the audiotape.

Tuason said the controversy was "disheartening." "We never expected anything like this," he added.

Garcillano's ad interim appointment to the commissions expired last Friday and technically had lost his position, having been bypassed seven times by the Commission on Appointments.

The commissioner has stopped reporting for work since the start of this week.

If not reappointed by the President, Garcillano would lose his status as a constitutional official and could be subpoenaed to hearings in Congress. He would also lose his privilege of being removed from office only through impeachment once found guilty by Congress of charges such as violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust, among others.

Tuason declined to state what sanctions might be meted on Garcillano if the latter would be found guilty of misdemeanor by the Comelec.

Between wars, Marines turn to buko pies, smoked fish

By Julie S. Alipala,
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PANAMAO, Sulu—They initially turned to baking pies and smoked fish as a hobby only to realize that they could actually make money from it.

The buko (young coconut) pies and smoked fish products of the men of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 4 here have not only become profitable, with the market for them growing by the day. They have also had a positive effect on the Marines' peacemaking efforts in the area.

According to Lt. Col. Rudy Belen, MBLT4 commander, learned the skills to bake pies and make smoked fish from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) about two years ago.

Initially, the men only resorted to baking to increase their supply of food, particularly snacks, as there were hardly any sari-sari stores near their previous Barangay Buhanginan base in Patikul town.

"Security was also an issue because soldiers could not simply go to Jolo to buy snack items whenever they wanted something to munch on," Belen said.

The abundance of coconut in the area plus their newly acquired skills inspired the soldiers to produce an inexpensive snack, the buko pie "à la Laguna pride."

They began by baking about three or four pies using young coconut, condensed milk, all-purpose flour and sugar.

"It tasted good, so we baked several more trays and shared our product with other units and barangay officials," Belen said.

When Patikul town mayor Esmon Suhuri learned about the soldiers' pie-making skills, he ordered several trays of the pies.

"And I liked the taste, besides its halal," Sahuri said. Halal is a quality-control standard for food prescribed by Islamic religious tradition.

Word about the buko pie spread and soon the products were being shared with villagers and other Marine units.

Lt. Col. Generoso Mariano of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 9 said they have also tasted other kinds of pies that MBLT4 makes.

"If durian is in season, you'll get the chance to savor the exotic buko-durian pie," said Mariano.

Col. Juancho Sabban, chief of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said villagers wanted to learn buko-pie making and asked the soldiers to share the technique.

"The villagers preferred more livelihood projects and what our troops did was to transfer their skills to villagers," Sabban said.

By October 2004, there were so many villagers wanting to learn buko pie-making that the Marines decided to open the Patikul Skills Institute.

From buko pie-making, the institute ventured into smoked fish and hollow blocks production.

Belen said the market and demand for the soldiers' products "really increased."

OFWs warned vs text raffle scam

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday warned overseas Filipino workers and their families not to believe in text messages purportedly claiming that they have won P2 million in a 'Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' electronic raffle draw for OFWs.

The scam was brought to the attention of the DFA by a staff of the Philippine Embassy in Egypt.

The DFA said the scam works this way. A potential OFW victim receives a message announcing that he or she has won the hefty prize and can claim the money from 'BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura' himself at telephone no. "0915-6907234."

Once the supposed "winner" calls that number, a male voice—not of Buenaventura—will ask the caller to dial another number. The second call will be answered by another male who will then explain that the winner must first "remit" $800 to the Philippines through Western Union Money Transfer before the prize can be claimed.

Donnie Fetalino, a communications officer of the Philippine Embassy in Cairo, received one such message two weeks ago.

Fetalino followed the instructions in the text message and was attended to, in the two calls he was told to make, by different males who did not give their names. The second male even encouraged him to "validate" the prize by giving the alleged phone number of the president of Western Union Philippines. Volt Contreras

Laya; 75

MRS. PILAR Solon Laya of Iligan City died on June 9 in San Jose, California, USA, at the age of 75.

She is survived by her husband, lawyer Salvador Lluch Laya, children Frankie, Maricar, Tommy, Gerry, Connie, Marivic, Ronee, and Liza, children-in-law, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains will arrive on Sunday, June 19, at 9 a.m. in Cagayan de Oro City and will lie at the family residence in Iligan City.

The deceased and her husband were en route to Chicago where they were to attend a Rotary convention on June 18.

Interment will be on Wednesday at St. Michael's Memorial Park after the 9 a.m. Mass at St. Michael's Cathedral.

Palace raises new alarm on bird flu

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG yesterday raised anew the alarm bells on bird flu spreading in the Southeast Asian region.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the threat of the Avian flu should not be taken lightly because it could wipe out the P150-billion-a-year poultry industry and force the extermination of endangered species of birds, including the Philippine eagle.

"Against a wiretapped tape for a 'jueteng' scandal this may sound boring, but make no mistake this is a killer virus for the poultry industry," Yap said in a briefing in Malacañang.

The World Health Organization has warned that an outbreak of bird flu poses a serious threat to Southeast Asia. It has so far killed at least 10 people and has infected millions of chickens.

Avian flu was believed to have infected birds only until it jumped the species barrier for the first time in Hong Kong eight years ago.

Migratory birds are suspected carriers of the virus which is why, Yap said, the government has put under close watch 20 swamp lands and watering holes in Davao; Pampanga; Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte; Aparri, Cagayan; Olango Island, Cebu; Negros Occidental; Isabela, Caraga; Agusan del Norte; Surigao province, Panay Island; Sorsogon; Gen. Santos City; Cotabato and Mindoro.

"We're very critical about watching these out because when they come and they affect an area like Davao's National Wildlife Park, the Philippine eagle may have to be stamped out," Yap said.

Yap said the government was treating this seriously that it had put up a P150-million fund to set up precautionary measures similar to the ones adopted for the SARS virus a few years ago.

"We are also putting under surveillance the country's ports for smuggling of fresh poultry products from countries with Avian flu such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Thailand and Indonesia, Pakistan, Laos, South Africa, North Korea, and Malaysia" said Yap.

Indon MP receives 2 freed hostages

ZAMBOANGA, City — Two Indonesian hostages rescued by Filipino troops from Muslim Abu Sayyaf rebels were turned over to Indonesian officials in the southern Philippines yesterday.

Yamin Labaso and Erikson Hutagaol were rescued Sunday after elite forces stormed an Abu Sayyaf lair in Jolo. A third hostage, Ahmad Resmiyadi, remains in captivity but is believed still to be alive.

The three were seized by pirates in March after their boat was attacked off the coast of Malaysia's Sabah state. They were then turned over to Abu Sayyaf rebels and were kept in jungle hideouts in Jolo.

Medical checks

The two were presented to Indonesian member of parliament Janus Effendi Habibie, still wearing their hospital gowns. They have been undergoing medical checks since they were freed Sunday.

Habibie said Indonesian authorities were working closely with their Philippine counterparts in trying to go after the Abu Sayyaf. He did not give specific details.

"They are our common enemy. We are helping hunt them down and there should be no mercy from us," Habibie said through an interpreter.

The two are to be flown back to Indonesia on Saturday, he said. *AFP*

Indonesian president due Monday

INDONESIAN President Susilo Bambang Yudyohono will be in Manila on Monday for a three-day state visit.

On the same day, President Yahya AJ Jammeh of the Republic of Gambia will also arrive for a four-day visit.

Yudyohono is arriving via a special flight on June 20 at around 4 p.m. and will be welcomed at the Villamor Air Base. He leaves Manila in the morning of June 22.

State visit

His predecessor, Megawati Soekarnoputri made her state visit to Manila in August 2001. President Arroyo's last visit to Jakarta was during the Asian-African summit held last April.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Indonesian Embassy have yet to give details of Yudyohono's trip.

Indonesia and the Philippines forged diplomatic relations in 1949. The post-9/11 era saw the two Southeast Asian neighbors share a common tag as base to armed groups which the United States government says have links with the Al Qaeda terrorist network. *Volt Contreras*

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ARTIST Sultan Mangosan wields goggles and magnifying glass to give pointillism a new twist by burning small dots on a wooden "canvas."

AFP

Artists' village showcases Cordillera culture

BAGUIO CITY—On a rare cloudless day in the mountains, self-taught artist Sultan Mangosan dons blacked-out welder's goggles and begins to paint, using a magnifying glass to coax the sun to burn an image on a wooden plank.

Giving French impressionist Georges Seurat's pointillism — using small dots to create an image — a new twist, the long-haired Mangosan, 30, takes up to eight months to complete his "solar painting" of rice fields on terraced plots wrapped around mountainsides.

He is one of the artists who ply their crafts at Tam-awan, a 2.5-hectare (6.2-acre) art center located in a former cattle pasture on the edge of Baguio City. It was set up several years ago as a showcase of the Cordillera mountain region's cultural heritage.

"I came here a few days ago and they welcomed me," says Tim Lister, a British professor of English based in South Korea who also dabbles in the arts. He rented one of the century-old wood and grass Igorot tribal farm homes that dominate the hilly landscape for P500 a night.

Vanishing way of life

"They let me have a whole table to myself all day, where I can create and make a little mess," he tells AFP, sitting on a corner table at the Tam-awan coffee shop as he daubs paint to papier-mache figures.

The artists' village was set up in 1997 by local painter Ben Cabrera and his friends, who wanted a place to relocate some abandoned Igorot huts in Ifugao and Kalinga provinces as part of an undertaking to preserve the vanishing way of life of the mountain peoples of the northern Philippines.

One of the houses is a 107-old Ifugao "fertility" hut where, in previous generations, prospective Igorot couples actually used to have sex prior to marriage to ensure both partners were fertile.

If one was impotent, the partner was free to get another mate.

Some of the huts now serve as exhibition galleries. On display last month were the works of Mangosan's older brother, Jordan Mangosan, the best living exponent of the magnifying glass-wielding artists here.

"One piece takes six to eight months, depending on the weather," says Emerald Mariano, an aspiring poet who serves as the village's manager.

Burning wood

"You have to wait for the right time — it's not just the regular sunny day — and then you burn on the wood. You can also burn on handmade paper or canvas," he says.

When the artist wants to paint at night he has the option of using a soldering pen.

Either way, "putting in the details takes great care. Once you make a mistake then that's it", Mariano adds.

Hanging off a tree branch at the upper reaches of the village is a giant, Buddhism-inspired spider web-shaped installation by local artist John Frank Sabado made of rope, glass and wood. Called "The Dream Catcher," it is supposed to protect sleepers from nightmares.

From a quirky curiosity, the place now attracts hundreds of paying visitors a week, making it self-sustaining. Artists hang out to do portraits of visitors or exhibit and sell their work, for which the village gets commission fees. Venue rentals, entrance tickets, and coffee shop receipts provide revenue for the village.

Tam-awan may soon find an influx of many more overseas visitors as it is set inclusion in the next Philippine edition of the popular Lonely Planet travel guide.

Eschewing the huts, some guests pitch tents on the ridgetop, where on a clear day the shimmering waters of the South China Sea are visible, some 40 kilometers to the northwest.

Different strokes

Grade schoolers and boy scouts around the region make educational trips to the village. Some couples use the place to exchange marriage vows and families have hosted reunions.

It stages performance art on the stone courtyard outside the coffeeshop, one of few flat surfaces in the area. It opens exhibits every three weeks, with the output of a well-travelled South Korean photographer Shim Jae-Wook currently on display.

The village holds regular workshops on paper- and print-making, textile art, portraiture and other media as well as traditional Igorot crafts such as basket weaving and making wine using fermented rice.

"They've probably gotten used to it now," Mariano says of the neighbors. "It has also been beneficial for them because before, the road was not paved," she adds. The paving has raised property values in Baguio's Pinsao district.

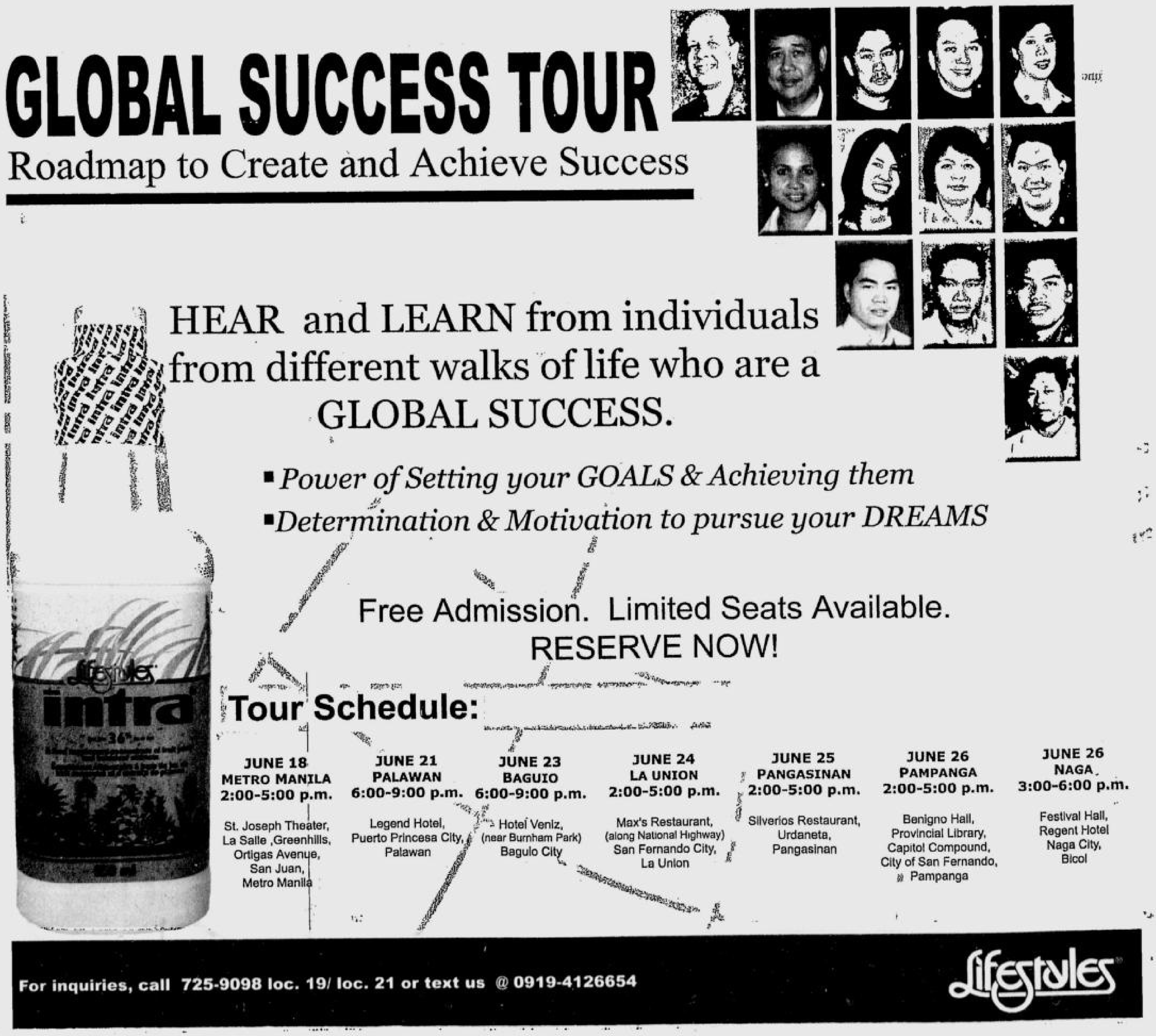
Lister, the British guest, says the place reminds him of a similar center in western Wales that has served as an artists' haven for about 30 years.

Mariano says Indonesia has also a counterpart art center, called Taman Mini.

Understandably, the place is not to everyone's taste.

"You have to be a bit crazy to appreciate what they are doing up there," says Patrick Shontogan, a government employee of the local office of the agriculture department.

AFP



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Lifestyles

Resettled squatters get break from suppliers

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE HOUSING and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) has allowed residents who have resettled to give way to the construction of the P26.1-billion North Rail project to purchase building materials for their new homes from the suppliers of their choice.

Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of HUDCC, said his office had received complaints from residents affected by the clearing operations, who claimed that prices quoted by accredited suppliers were way above the costs quoted by independent suppliers.

Each family affected by the project is given a loan of P40,000 for housing materials as part of the resettlement package. The loan is interest-free and payable in 30 years.

De Castro said the loan would instead be given directly to the beneficiaries so they could buy from other suppliers.

"I've heard numerous complaints regarding this so it would be better to change the procedure to ensure transparent and speedy relocation of the families," De Castro said.

The HUDCC chair said loans would be released in four tranches of P10,000 to ensure that they will be used for housing materials. The beneficiaries would be required to present receipts for the housing materials to receive the next tranche.

De Castro said he immediately ordered a change in the policy after hearing the complaints during his visit yesterday to the resettlement sites in Meycauayan and Balagtas, Bulacan.

"The government wants to grant shelter security to the informal settlers of North Rail while we modernize railway system in Luzon," De Castro said. "We will act immediately on complaints like this one in order to facilitate the process."

Big-ticket project

The 32.2-kilometer railway transit project, which will link Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Northern Luzon, is the biggest project between the Philippines and China.

The train will run from Caloocan City through Malolos in Bulacan, Clark Field in Pampanga, Sison in Pangasinan all the way to San Fernando City in La Union.

At least 30 four-car diesel trains will run through the existing track of the Philippine National Railways, which later will be converted into modern double tracks.

About P20.5 billion of the total project cost will be funded through a loan from the Export-Import Bank of China while the remaining P5.6 billion will come from the North Luzon Railway Corp., the local counterpart of the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. that will construct the first phase of the train line.

The Chinese construction firm will undertake the first section of the North Rail's phase one covering Caloocan City up to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark Field.

The rail line will run through six stations namely Caloocan, Valenzuela, Marilao, Bocaue, Guiguinto and Malolos. The depot will be in Valenzuela City.

Travel time between Caloocan and Malolos will be shortened to 32 minutes and the train service is expected to serve at least 41,186 passengers a day.

After the completion of the Caloocan-DMIA line, phase two will be a branch line to Subic Freeport Zone while phase three will link Caloocan City to Fort Bonifacio in Makati City. Phase four will be an extension to San Fernando, La Union.

Ban on travel to Iraq stays

By Jerome Aning

THE BAN on the deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Iraq remains, especially with the rising number of bombings there, a Foreign Affairs official said yesterday.

"We will not lift the ban because of the increase in incidents of bombings. The ban is constantly under review, but right now, the review indicates the wisdom of the ban," undersecretary for migrant workers affairs Jose Brillantes said.

Brillantes said the DFA's offer for Filipinos in Iraq – whether staying legally or illegally – to voluntary go home still stands.

The official said as of their last count, some 4,000 documented OFWs were deployed in Iraq. He added that the department did not know how many Filipinos in Iraq were undocumented because "we don't know where they are."

Unofficial reports vary on the number of undocumented Filipinos in Iraq, with estimates, ranging from 800 to 2,000. If a recruitment agency official is to be believed, OFWs continue to go to Iraq using third countries as jumpoff points with the collusion of unscrupulous local placement firms and airport authorities.

According to Brillantes, embassy staff in Iraq continues to scour the strife-torn country for undocumented Filipinos.

Police on defense mode vs NPA

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE POLICE yesterday went into "defense mode" following a series of ambushes of and attacks on government forces in Luzon by leftist guerrillas.

Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao ordered all field commanders in insurgency-infested areas to beef up security and mount a coordinated defense with nearby military units.

According to PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, the police expect more rebel offensives in the coming days.

He said communist rebels were taking advantage of the scandals and controversies, including rumors of destabilization, now hounding the government.

"We expected that indeed they would take advantage of the situation. [But] we will not allow these armed elements to harass or even take over our stations or a municipal government or building without resistance. from the military and police," Bataoil said.

Bataoil said all regional commands have been ordered to go into "active defense" after a series of encounters with armed elements of the New People's Army in Northern Luzon, and RHB (Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan) in Central Luzon, and in parts of the Visayas and Mindanao.

Under this defense system, provincial and regional mobile groups, the PNP's reaction teams, must augment government troops in far-flung areas.

Bataoil said field commanders must be able to prevent or withstand rebel attacks, and go after the attackers.

He said the PNP was also keeping tabs on organized crime groups as well.

"We don't think that they will be able to regroup and take advantage of the situation by way of conducting kidnap for ransom activities or bank robberies," Bataoil said.

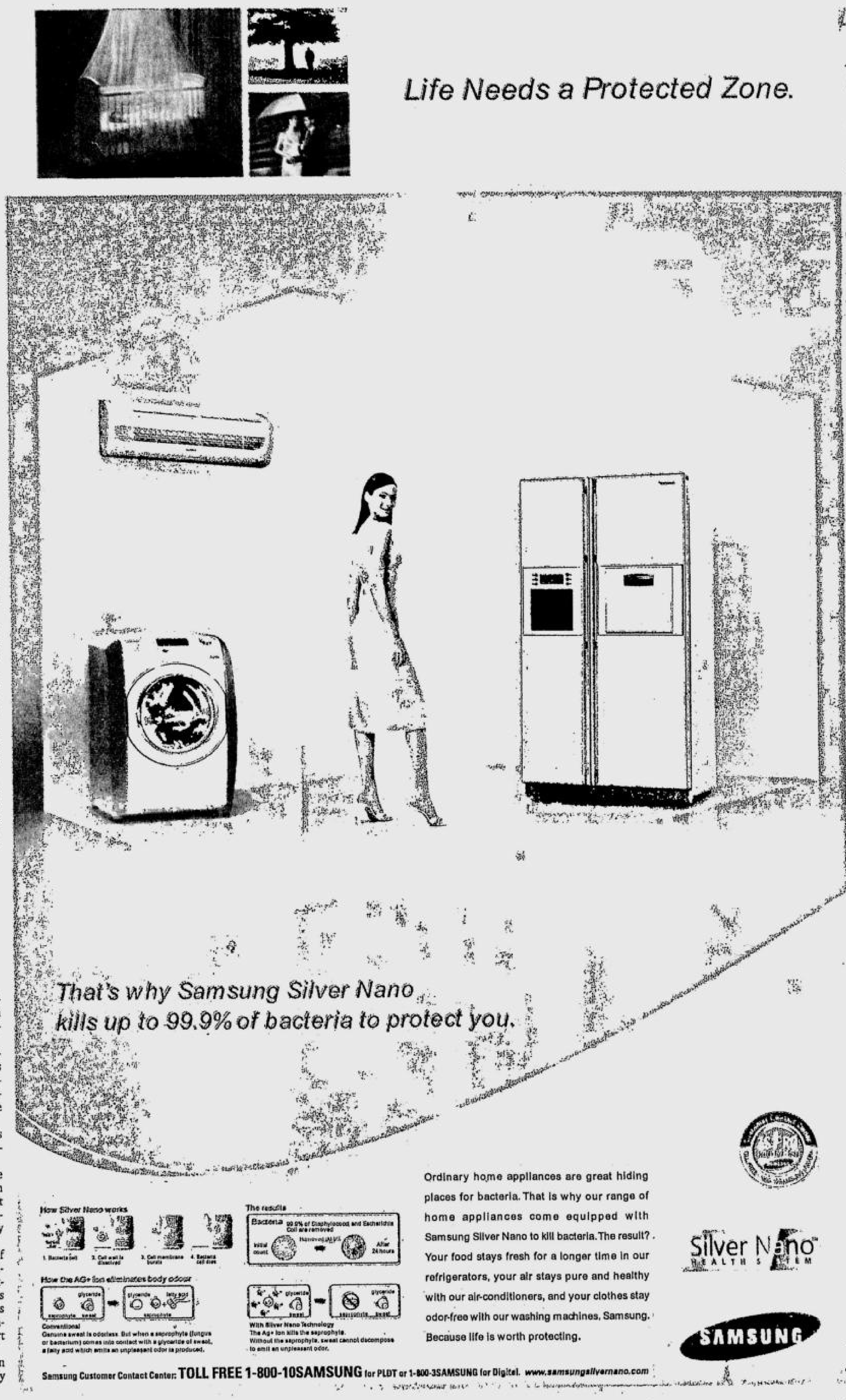
On June 13, nine soldiers were ambushed and killed by the NPA in Barangay Malaya, Cervantes, Ilocos Sur.

The day before, an RHB suspect died while three of his companions were captured during an encounter on the Olongapo-Gapan road in Barangay Saguing, Dinalupihan, Bataan. Another RHB member was wounded in that encounter.

That same day, 13 RHB members were killed in a 14-hour firefight in Barangay San Nicolas, Mexico, Pampanga.

On June 3, a village official and a soldier were killed while eight others were wounded when more than 50 NPA members overran an Army outpost in Tiempo District, Tubo, Abra. The NPA made off with 29 rifles.

LOMIBAO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DepEd chief given oversight powers over CHEd

ABAD

By Alcuin Papa

EDUCATION Secretary Florencio Abad has been given oversight powers over the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd), an agency under the Office of the President.

Executive Order No. 434, dated June 7, 2005 and released yesterday, stated that the President's power "to exercise policy oversight" over the CHEd was "hereby delegated to the Secretary of Education."

The President's directive also repeals all executive issuances, rules and regulations found to be inconsistent with the provisions of EO No. 434, which takes effect on June 3.

According to the order, Abad would be the President's alter ego with respect to the CHEd but the agency would not fall administratively under the DepEd.

The CHEd, which is headed by chair Dr. Carlito Puno, was created by Republic Act No. 7722, or the Higher Education Act of 1994.

The law states that the CHEd should be "independent and separate" from the Department of Education and "attached to the Office of the President for administrative purposes only."

The Palace justified the order on the basis of the President's exercise of executive powers and control of all executive departments, bureaus and offices, and her authority to reorganize the administrative structure of the Office of the President.

A CHEd official said the President's delegation of her policy oversight powers over the CHEd to Abad was an indication of her loss of trust and confidence in the commission, particularly with regard to issues "concerning the private school sector, like the cap on tuition increases and the quality of education."

"The order is a wakeup call to the commission and commissioners to meet standards to improve higher education and not to restrict private schools with counter-productive policies," said CHEd executive director Julito Vitriolo.

The CHEd has been receiving complaints from owners and administrators of private schools about its policies.

"The perception is that the commission and the commissioners can't get their act together to handle all the problems. The trend is that there is confusion because of the (CHEd's) policies with private schools complaining of unreasonable policies," Vitriolo said.

Vitriolo, who has been with CHEd for the past 11 years, said this was the first time that the Office of the President had delegated its oversight function over the commission to another agency.

He said the President probably chose to put someone she could trust to set the CHEd in order, with Abad acting as a sort of troubleshooter.

The CHEd ran into controversy early this year when it went after substandard private nursing schools which have been unable to produce graduates capable of passing the licensure exams.

Last month, former CHEd Chair Fr. Rolando de la Rosa resigned allegedly because of pressure from lawmakers and private school owners.

Recently, the CHEd ordered all colleges and universities to peg their tuition hikes to the inflation rate of 8.5 percent. Any school wishing to raise tuition above the inflation rate has to justify the increase before the commission, the CHEd said.

The CHEd also came under fire recently from militant student groups which said that some schools were defying the CHEd order and that tuition increases were the highest in recent years at 11.52 percent.

Vitriolo said private schools should be allowed to grow and develop.

"Policy-making with regard to private schools should be balanced because we recognize the role they play," he said

He said "stake holders" in private education like owners, administrators and students should be consulted on policies, as mandated by law.

Abad, who is on a trip abroad, will be meeting with Puno as soon as he returns to discuss the terms of reference and implementation of the President's order.

Clan wars threaten ceasefire in South

VICIOUS clan wars in the southern Philippines are a major threat to a fragile two-year ceasefire between the government and separatist rebels, military officials and analysts said on Wednesday.

Maj. Dickson Hermoso, a member of the government's ceasefire panel, said soldiers and rebels were often dragged into family differences in Mindanao, turning clan feuds, known locally as "rido," into full-scale battles.

"Rido is undermining the gains of the ongoing talks between the government and the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front)," Hermoso told a forum on Philippine clan wars yesterday.

"More often than not, the origin of a firefight on conflict-affected areas in Mindanao is due to rido." Malaysia has been brokering talks since March 2001 to end more than 36 years of separatist rebellion that has killed at least 120,000 people, stunted development on resource-rich Mindanao, and hurt the overall investment climate.

Informal meetings to narrow differences on the thorny issue of ancestral land for Muslims in the south are due to resume on June 21 in Kuala Lumpur.

Studies funded by the Asia Foundation and the US Agency for International Development found there had been more than 1,200 clan feuds in Mindanao since the 1930s, killing nearly 5,000 people and displacing tens of thousands.

About 60 percent of the feuds, which often last for several generations, remain unresolved, adding to the perception of lawlessness and violence in the southern Philippines.

Abhoud Syed Lingga, executive director of Mindanao-based Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, said most of the feuds were caused by political and business rivalries or land disputes, but could be over something as petty as a rough game of basketball. *Reuters*

Dayrit assumes lofty WHO post

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO MONTHS after being eased out of the Arroyo Cabinet, former Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit is set to become the highest ranking Filipino official ever at the World Health Organization (WHO).

Dayrit has been appointed director of human resources for health, a new post at the WHO.

Starting Aug. 1, he will be based in Geneva office to supervise policies on the condition of health professionals in countries worldwide.

Dayrit said his appointment will be good for at least two years.

He said he was formally offered the position on May 16, six days after Malacañang announced that he would be replaced by a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Francisco Duque III. Dayrit got his appointment last Monday.

With the new post, he said, he would have to resign from the Commission on Social Determinants for Health, another key international position he just occupied early this year.

"This will be an entirely new challenge to me," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Dayrit said he had been offered the job, apparently owing to his experience at the Department of Health where he had served for at least three years.

DAYRIT

There he was widely acknowledged for containing the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome virus that threatened to spread in the country, and for bringing low-cost medicines to the countryside, among other projects.

But he got a rebuke from Church leaders and pro-life advocates when he launched the "Ligtas Buntis" reproductive health program last February.

The program was seen as part of an extensive government effort to control the population, primarily through artificial methods. Dayrit later admitted that he himself preferred natural birth control.

As WHO director for human resources, Dayrit said he would now be concentrating on issues such as the "brain drain" involving health workers in countries like the Philippines.

Drive to stop medical exodus launched

By Leila B. Salaverria

HEALTH experts have begun implementing measures to stem the exodus of doctors and nurses, including having medical students in a special program at the University of the Philippines-Manila sign a contract requiring them to work in the country for a certain number of years.

Dr. Jaime Galvez-Tan suggested, among other things, the compulsory service of health workers before they would be allowed to go abroad and the forging of bilateral and mutually beneficial agreements with countries importing Filipino health workers.

Cecilia Tomas, dean of UP Manila's College of Medicine, said the students admitted this year to the school's Regionalization Program (RP) were made to sign a "legally binding" contract that stipulates they would work in the country the same number of years they studied at the college.

"This is the first time we made the students sign [such a] contract. Before, under the RP, the contract was more of a social one and most of the students did not return to their provinces. We wanted to strengthen it," Tomas said in an interview yesterday.

The contract is called Acceptance to Serve and Assumption of Liabilities, or ASAL. After completing the contract, the graduate is free to work anywhere. Those who violate the terms of the contract would be made to pay for their tuition, since the fees at UP are subsidized by the government. A course at the College of Medicine usually lasts five years.

Marketing Institute of the Philippines
The Education and Training Arm of the
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BRAND MANAGEMENT
June 27, 28 & 30, 2005
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1:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati

The concept of Brand Management has gone into an evolutionary process ever since it was introduced by Procter & Gamble in 1972. Several multinational companies introduced their own versions at various stages and the concept has been modified to adapt to the individual company's working environment and management style. This seminar will provide the participants with the essential working skills required in the brand management job.

Target Participants
This seminar is suites for new recruits in the brand management job or those who may already be doing a brand management function, but still has no extensive job orientation. Managers coming from brand-related field i.e. sales, advertising, promotions, media and public relations as well as undergraduate or faculty handling a brand management course will likewise benefit from this seminar.

Seminar Objectives
At the end of this seminar on Brand Management, participants will learn the key essentials of the brand management function. The following key functional tasks will be dealt extensively: An introduction to Brand Management, Crafting the Brand Personality, Brand Strategies that lead to Success, Understanding Brand Research and Measurement and Revitalizing and Managing Brands Over Time.

Methodology
Lectures, exercises, plus the brand marketing plan project will equip participants with the right job orientation. Hands on practitioners should be able to share pragmatic insights about brand management.

REGISTRATION FEES
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Registration fees are inclusive of seminar manual identification card and nacks.
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SEMINAR PROGRAM
Day 1 - June 27, 2005 (Monday)
Introductory Session - 1:00 - 1:30 pm
Session Chair: MS. MARIVIC AC-AC
Professor, San Beda College
Session Chair

Session 1 - 1:30 - 3:30 pm
Introduction to Brand Management
Defines the context of strategic brand management by taking the participants through a historical review o branding, by defining what a brand is why brands matter, how anything can be branded and what customer-based brand equity is all about.
Speaker: DR. LEONARDO R. GARCIA, JR.
Dean, School of Professional & Continuing Education
DLS-COLLEGE OF ST. BENILDE

Session 2 - 3:45 - 5:30 pm
Understanding Brand Research and Measurement
Exposes the participants to multiple marketing research measures that can help brand managers understand what is happening to their brands.
Speaker: MR. RICARDO C. DE VERA
Consultant, DTI
Certified International Trainor (Singapore)

BRIEFING ON THE FINAL PROJECT - 5:30 - 6:00 pm

Day 2 - June 28, 2005 (Tuesday)
LINK-UP SESSION - 1:00 - 1:30 PM

Session 3 - 1:30 -3:30 pm
Crafting The Brand Personality
One important aspect of the brand is its personality as reflected in the associations that consumers hold toward the brand.
Speaker: DR. KAREN V. DE ASIS
Marketing Director
DE LA SALLE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Session 4 - 3:45 - 5:30 pm
Brand Strategies That Lead to Success
This session provides the participants with insights on how best to design branding strategies.
Speaker: MR. JUN G. ALCANTARA
Vice President for Marketing
ASIA BREWERY, INC.

BRAINSTORMING - 5:30 - 6:3-0 pm

Day 3 - June 30, 2005 Thursday)
LINK UP SESSION - 1:00 - 1:30pm

Session 5 - 1:30 - 3:30 pm
Revitalizing and Managing Brand Over Time
One of the challenges in managing brands is the many changes that occur in the marketing environment.
Speaker: MS. MA. TERESA V. GARGANTIEL
Senior Executive Officer
JIMENEZ BASIC

PRESENTATION OF CASES/SUMMATION - 3:45 - 5:30 pm

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 16, 2005
11th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 Cor 11:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 6:7-15

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they hold that the more they say, the more chance they have of being heard. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

"This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven,
holy be your name,
your kingdom come
and your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the kind of bread we need.
Forgive us our debts
just as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.
Do not bring us to the test
but deliver us from the evil one.

"If you forgive others their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either."

Commentary

And how are we to pray—in Jesus' words. Even repeating them teaches us priorities and catapults us into a world beyond our small experience and knowledge. What are we to pray for—first, the honor of God, God's will, God's kingdom and the way it comes upon our earth in us, as in heaven; others' foods and daily needs, forgiveness of others and endurance in the face of trials; but especially forgiveness—easing of others' debts, all small things really in the face of the enormous debt our God has released us from with such mercy. Our Father, make us those who are known for forgiveness, generosity towards others and mercy—for that is the only holiness you really want from us, along with the sharing of all that you have given to us among your children, our brothers and sisters most in need. It should take us years to ever get past the first words: Our Father, our God who holds every man and woman in the world with such care and tender regard, concerned personally what happens to every one of them, and what we do to all who make up our lives... Amen.

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Kapatiran: Building character

FORMING an "enlightened, mature and responsible citizenry from which servant leaders" will emerge and "building a nation of character" topped the list of objectives presented by the Kapatiran sa Pangkalahatang Kabutihan (KPK) to the officers and members of the St. Thomas More and Associates (STMA), the socio-political arm of the Couples for Christ, at Club Filipino recently.

KPK president Johnny Cardenas, in a press statement, said "KPK hopes to achieve these objectives through character building, values formation, consistent ethic of life, love of country and basic political education in cooperation with any and all organizations interested in pursuing these objectives."

With education as its main function, KPK said it is a "communitarian, nonviolent, interfaith and national political movement for the common good" organized in 2002.

It was KPK, the political movement, that gave birth to a new political party called the Alliance for the Common Good, or Ang Kapatiran, for short. The Commission on Elections acrredited the Ang Kapatiran as a national political party on May 8, 2004.

KPK was welcomed by Jose Tale, chair of the St. Thomas More and Associates, who praised the objectives of the movement and opened the possibility of a tie-up between STMA and KPK on certain specific projects that may benefit, for instance, the disabled, throughout the country.

Corrections

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, the peso-dollar closing rate on Page B1 of the Business section should have read 55.270—not 54.270.

* * *

IN the June 9 issue, a front-page story—"Mikey says La Vista house just 'modest'"—misstated the lot size of the controversial Boracay mansion allegedly owned by deposed President Joseph Estrada. The lot size is 7,000 sq. m.—not 7,000 hectares.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NBI charges Ong with inciting to sedition

From page A1

al criminal charges the department was considering leveling against Ong. The others include violation of the Anti-Wiretapping Law, illegal assembly, and slight illegal detention involving TSgt. Vidal Doble of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Malacañang supported the move against Ong. He said similar charges would be brought soon against others who had committed the same crime, including retired Maj. Gen. Fortunato Abat, who had called for the overthrow of Ms Arroyo.

On Friday, Ong called a news conference to announce he had the original copy of an alleged wiretap of Ms Arroyo's telephone conversation with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano purportedly showing she rigged the elections.

He then took sanctuary in the San Carlos Seminary saying he feared for his life if he fell into the hands of police authorities. He stayed there for three days until priests took him to an undisclosed place.

Complaint

In a six-page complaint, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said Ong violated Article 142 of the Revised Penal Code, which penalizes a person for uttering "seditious words or speeches, write, publish, or circulate scurrilous libels against the government."

The article also makes it unlawful for people to "suggest or incite rebellious conspiracies or riots, or which lead or tend to stir up the people against the lawful authorities or to disturb the peace of the community, the safety and order of the government, or who shall knowingly conceal such evil practices."

Wycoco cited Ong's press briefing in which he "openly lambasted the manner Ms Arroyo ran the government, stating that she is an illegitimate President, as she supposedly committed fraud during the 2004 national elections."

Asking the President to step down, Ong allegedly called on the public to mount a "civil disobedience" campaign and for the Church and the people to rally behind him while he was holed up at the seminary, Wycoco said, although he noted few responded to his plea.

"He also called on the military to come forward and reject [Ms Arroyo] as its Commander in Chief because she has no mandate from the people, having cheated her way to victory," Wycoco said, quoting newspaper reports.

Such statements, he said, were "obviously designed to create hatred against the present administration and to encourage the people to dislodge President Arroyo from office.'"

Issue not who's talking

Asked whether the department would pursue the wiretapping case despite statements by Ong's lawyers that only victims of the crime could bring the complaint, Gonzalez said: "Yes, I'll stake my reputation on it. The issue here is not who is talking but the fact that there is wiretapping."

Gonzalez also said he visited Doble yesterday and offered to put him under the department's witness protection program. Doble's wife has claimed the intelligence agent had been illegally detained by Ong in the seminary.

Bishop Socrates Villages took Doble out of the compound on Monday following his wife's complaint.

Ong has said Doble gave him the original recording of the wiretapped presidential conversation but denied he forced him to remain with him.

Doble has rejected Ong's allegation that he was the source of the audio tape. He said in a television interview he was simply asked by Ong to read a statement denouncing government irregularities.

Apart from one television interview, Doble has not spoken to reporters to answer questions in detail about his association with Ong or elaborate more on the mysterious wiretapping.

Military authorities have said Doble was under investigation and that his lawyers had advised him not to speak to reporters.

Ex-Isafp chief 'invisible man'

By Dona Pazzibugan

REAR Admiral Tirso Danga is a sort of an "invisible man" in the military establishment, true to his calling as a spy master.

As chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), the 54-year-old Danga has said he saw himself as a shadowy character, "not to be heard nor seen."

Now the spotlight is on him in the "Gloriagate" wiretapping controversy. It would be impossible for him to stay out of sight.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy "Makabayan" Class '75, Danga was Isafp chief from September 2003 until late last year, when he had to step aside because of illness.

He was on the job during the time Isafp operatives allegedly bugged President Macapagal-Arroyo's telephone. The wiretap purportedly showed Ms Arroyo cheated in the May elections.

Upon his return from a long medical leave abroad, reportedly for treatment of leukemia in Israel, Danga was named AFP deputy chief of staff for intelligence with supervision over Isafp.

Curt denial

When Isafp was identified by whistle-blower Samuel Ong as the source of what he described as the "mother of all tapes," Danga issued a curt denial that Isafp was ever engaged in wiretapping, abruptly left reporters and sped away in his van. He has since made himself unavailable to the media.

The last time Danga came under media glare was during the Oakwood mutiny on July 27, 2003. He was then commander of Camp Aguinaldo. He was also one of three people whom the mutineers had asked to negotiate with for their surrender.

Danga was believed to have been chosen for the role because he had once been a coup leader.

He joined the 1989 coup d'état led by Col. Gregorio Honasan for which he said he was imprisoned. Danga, then aged 37 and a Navy lieutenant commander, later told an investigative panel the experience still pained him.

Among the first in his class to be promoted to a star-rank, Danga got his second star as rear admiral in April. He is from San Pablo, Isabela, the son of an Army enlisted man. *With a report from Fe Zamora*

Military...

From page A1

quiry or investigation on the alleged involvement of military personalities in the wiretapping issue," said AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Honrado. "The AFP will never tolerate illegal acts and any officer or enlisted personnel found wanting will have to face the full force of the law."

The military had at first kept silent over allegations its men were involved in the wiretapping purportedly showing Ms Arroyo cheated in the last election. Then it issued a blanket denial after whistle-blower Samuel Ong said he was given the original wiretap of the President's telephone by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

It said the Isafp had no wiretapping capability.

Honrado said as a matter of policy, the Armed Forces did not engage in illegal activities. But he said with the implication by Ong of an Isafp operative, TSgt. Vidal Doble, the Armed Forces would like "to settle the issue once and for all."

1989 coup

Golez said the 54-year-old Danga had assigned to Isafp officers and men involved in the 1989 coup attempt against then President Corazon Aquino.

He said some of these men were now being implicated in the wiretapping controversy, which Malacañang had said was part of an opposition plan to unseat Ms Arroyo.

Golez yesterday said Danga should go on leave or he should be relieved in order not to sabotage investigations. Danga was Isafp chief during the last election, and Golez said Danga should go "so that there will be no suspicion that he is unduly interfering in the investigation."

Golez said that as deputy intelligence chief, Danga still "occupies a powerful position that could influence the inquiry within and outside AFP." He said this should "allay any fears that there may be some whitewash within the AFP."

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House asks GMA: Comment on tape

From page A1

alleged conversations between her and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, "she won't come out clean," said Santiago.

Speaking for the Youth Power Against Destabilization (Y-PAD), John Voltaire Almeda told reporters that while they were condemning the "blatant attempts" of the opposition to weaken the people's trust in the government through disinformation and destabilization, they were also challenging the President to break her silence.

"We want her to speak up and tell the truth," Almeda said, but added that Y-PAD was not calling for the replacement of Ms Arroyo as President.

Even the priests of the Diocese of Cubao in Quezon City sought an explanation from the President.

"We ask [her] to speak to us and clarify these issues," the priests said in a statement read during a Mass for "our country in this time of crisis" held Tuesday night at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral.

They said what the country needed was not another "People Power" revolt but a "shepherd" to guide Filipinos out of the political crisis. But for Ms Arroyo to be that shepherd, she should first speak up and tell the truth, they said.

Diplomacy

Golez said the House would seek the President's "position" and "comments" on the tape.

But Golez, a member of the pro-administration Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino, said that while some of his colleagues wanted a categorical answer, the request would be "worded in the most diplomatic and respectful manner befitting the presidency."

"I move that the various committees work together in crafting a letter addressed to the President ... requesting her position as well as comments on the audio tapes that are now the subject of this congressional inquiry," Golez said in presenting the motion, which was approved.

The House will also send letters to the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo; Commissioner Garcillano; Bong Ruado, chief of staff of Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, and "other personalities mentioned in the tape" to seek their comment.

The five House committees that will conduct the joint inquiry agreed to start it on Tuesday afternoon, with Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco, and possibly Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Garcillano as the first invited resource persons.

The public hearings will be held in the plenary hall to accommodate the large crowd expected to attend. Each hearing will be held from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Objection

But Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina objected to seeking Ms Arroyo's comment on the audio tape, saying: "We are treading on the domain of impeachment proceedings."

"This [also] goes against the grain of the constitutional prohibition against self-incrimination," said Baterina, a prosecutor during the impeachment trial of then President Joseph Estrada.

"If the President does not say anything, she's convicted. If she says [the voice is] hers, she's convicted. If she says it's not and later [we] find out [it's not true], she's convicted."

Baterina subsequently agreed to withdraw his objection, but warned that he would raise it again. He said later that the tape scandal had become a "witch-hunt."

Members of the House committees on public information, national defense, public order and security, electoral reform, and information communications technology also agreed to "inquire" from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, UK's Scotland Yard and other equivalent agencies in Japan, Australia, and Canada if they were willing to authenticate the tape and had the capability to do so.

After the executive session at the conference room of the Office of the Speaker, the lawmakers proceeded to the Andaya room where they held a public hearing and went through the motions of formally deciding on what they had earlier agreed on.

But they failed to reach a consensus on whether to play any of the versions of the tape. They are expected to decide on that before the inquiry begins.

"I think whether or not we will play a tape will be subject to debate, and a very fiery one for sure," said Remulla.

Setting the example

"The Commander in Chief should be an example of ethics," said the PMAAA's Santiago. "She should answer the questions now. She should confirm or deny whether she is the voice on the tape."

But retired Lt. Gen. Salvador Mison, PMAAA chair, said that notwithstanding Santiago's position, the group had no definite stand over the scandal besieging Ms Arroyo.

According to Mison, the PMAAA is a nonpolitical organization concerned with the welfare of its members and their dependents. But he said the association was not condoning the unlawful acts of its members.

Asked his opinion on why Ms Arroyo was not talking, Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño cited a text message in Filipino that was making the rounds yesterday: "Question: Why is GMA keeping mum? Answer: The people might recognize her voice."

The militant party-list representative said the joint inquiry at the House would be the first formal and official opportunity to ferret out the truth behind the controversial tape.

"Ultimately, the public will demand to hear Ms Arroyo's voice and views because she is the undisputed star of this sordid and shocking episode in the nation's history," Casiño said.

"Specifically, I am looking forward to seeing Bunye appear before Congress and explain his exposé, and confirm whether it was Ms Arroyo on tape and if it was she who authorized [its] release and distribution."

Transparency

In Nueva Vizcaya, Bishop Ramon Villena of the Diocese of Bayombong said he would lead the Catholic faithful in their demand for light to be shed on the allegations of election fraud against the President, including her relatives' alleged involvement in "jueteng" payoffs.

"We will never allow our people, especially the poor, to be cheated and to be exploited by jueteng lords. We will never waver from fighting whatever or whoever enslaves the Filipino people," Villena said.

According to Cubao Bishop Honesto Ongtioco, the President should lead "morally and transparently" if she is to move this country forward.

But he also called on national leaders to set aside personal welfare for the good of the majority.

"People are tired of endless scandals, accusations without evidence, and corruption," he said. By working together, Filipinos may give light to the "dark valley of greed, power, personal interest and vice," he said. *With reports from Nelson F. Flores, DJ Yap and Margaux C. Ortiz in Manila; and Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Take stand, CBCP urged

THE LAWYER of actress Susan Roces yesterday called on the Catholic Church to issue an "official collective position" on the alleged taped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, saying the controversy was a "moral" and not a legal issue.

Harriet Demetriou, a former chair of the Commission on Elections and now a lawyer of the widow of Ferdinand Poe Jr., opposition standard-bearer in the 2004 election, also added her voice to the clamor for Ms Arroyo to explain the alleged incriminating conversations.

But Demetriou said that her statement was her own, and that Roces would issue her own statement on the matter in due time.

"I am deeply troubled by the ominous silence of the Catholic Church on this raging controversy, which is fast tearing up the moral fiber of this nation. Where is the collective voice of the CBCP (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines) on this issue? We Filipino Catholics are waiting," Demetriou said. *Fe Zamora*

Respect GMA ...

From page A1

nio Castillo Coliseum in Bacoor, Ms Arroyo vowed to stand her ground and rally the country behind the fiscal reforms recently approved by Congress.

She said she would unite a "long divided Philippines" despite the efforts of "destabilizers" to undermine her administration.

"I urge all of you to help me become a good President," she said.

Velarde, who had also backed the election of President Joseph Estrada, Ms Arroyo's deposed predecessor, called for sobriety and warned the public against joining mass actions calling for Ms Arroyo's ouster.

He said the Filipino people "should learn from their experiences."

Velarde said he, too, was "carefully studying" the unfolding events.

"It would really be very difficult for us if we take drastic action," he said. "Our action should first be calibrated. We might be in a more complicated problem if we insist on making drastic moves."

He added: "Let us proceed slowly. Let us face this problem with sobriety so that we will not make a mistake. We have made mistakes many times."

As a concrete sign of support, throngs of El Shaddai members filled the newly built coliseum in Barangay Molino II.

Other leaders of the group were present, among them Mel Robles, former spokesperson of El Shaddai and now chair of the Light Railway Transit Authority, and Velarde's son, Buhay Rep. Rene Velarde.

After the ceremonies, Velarde led the assembly in holding a short prayer-rally.

"We will support [Ms Arroyo] because we believe what Brother Mike said. He knows what is good for the majority of the people," an elderly female member of El Shaddai told the INQUIRER.

Propaganda

Ermita told reporters that the President would break her silence after the National Bureau of Investigation concludes its own investigation on the audio tape.

He said the demands for the President's statement on the tape were motivated, not by the "thirst for truth," but by political propaganda.

Ermita also said the robust sale of pirated copies of the wiretapped conversations showed that some people were taking advantage of the hot issue to make money.

"I am not sure if it is correct to say that everybody would like to have the side of the truth. If that's the case, everyone in Makati will go to Baclaran to have a copy [of the tape]," he said.

Ermita expressed doubt that Filipinos outside Metro Manila were sensitive to the issue of the tape.

"Others have not related to it. Those from the provinces, like the cousins of my wife who just came here, said they have never heard of 'Hello, Garci,'" he said.

He was referring to the President's alleged opening line in the conversations, which has been converted into a novel ring tone for mobile phones.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the President should be on the offensive and crack down on her Cabinet and allies in both chambers of Congress to purge the disloyal.

"This is a brilliant opportunity for the President to change her Cabinet and her allies in Congress. This is the time to determine who are her real allies and who are the sycophants around her. She cannot have people who waffle under pressure," Santiago said, dispensing suggestions as she celebrated her 60th birthday yesterday.

"In times of crisis, she has a right to demand support from her followers, unless they want to be leaders, too—in which case they should be dispatched immediately," Santiago said.

She said the crackdown would restore public confidence in Ms Arroyo's administration and help it get back on track after being put "under siege" by the jueteng and wiretapping controversies.

Santiago also clarified that she was not advocating a special session to enable the Senate to investigate the wiretapping issue, saying she did not support an investigation of it.

"We're not even finished with the jueteng investigation," she said, clarifying her interview with reporters earlier in the day.

She said she only pointed out in response to a question that since Congress was in recess and the Senate had no previous referral on the wiretapping issue, the only way for those who wanted an investigation was if there would be a special session.

For or against?

Santiago said the President should not be merely on the defensive in the midst of all the charges being leveled at her.

The senator suggested that part of Ms Arroyo's offensives should be executed in her own backyard: "She should ask [her Cabinet members and her allies in the Senate and the House]: 'Are you for or against me?'"

She said the President should "put them [through] the wringer between now and the Sona," referring to the State of the Nation Address that the President is scheduled to deliver at the joint opening of Congress on July 25. *With Christine O. Avendaño*

Father Lolo dies amid turmoil

From page A1

"To him, all our problems are rooted on the question of leadership," Bitoon said in an interview on Tuesday. "He would tell us that we were really yet to find that one leader who would steer us to development."

Until he was diagnosed with malignant kidney and lung tumor last month, Glorioso had been vocal about the worsening poverty amid scandals hounding the current administration, the priest recalled.

Glorioso died at around 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, about three hours after the INQUIRER visited him at the St. Peter's College Seminary in San Pablo City in Laguna. He will be buried at the San Pablo Cathedral at 2 p.m. tomorrow.

"You'd know that he was very concerned," he said. "We would read the papers for at least an hour every morning. Then he would talk about the issues. He was passionate about them."

Glorioso had apparently seen enough, having outlived 10 presidents and eight popes.

Priests and seminarians at the San Pablo swear their "Father Lolo" would have had a mouthful to say about the controversies against President Macapagal-Arroyo had it not been for his poor condition.

To those who knew Glorioso, he had always possessed the heart of an activist. He was in the mold of the rebel priests during the Spanish era. And he was himself a quiet inspiration of some of today's most outspoken clerics.

But he was not really the type who took to the streets, said Bitoon, Ladayan parish priest in San Pedro.

"Probably because politics was much better during his younger days," he surmised. "There was still no occasion when the Church needed to rescue the republic."

Armchair activist

Much to Glorioso's regret, he was already in his late 70s, too weak to keep up with marchers, when martial law invited protests left and right three decades ago, Bitoon said.

He had to settle as an armchair activist when the protests culminated in the 1986 "people power" revolution. And when a second uprising took place in 2001, age had undoubtedly caught up with Glorioso.

Quietly, Glorioso encouraged the likes of Jaime Cardinal Sin and fellow Jesuit, "running priest" Robert Reyes, who has been in the forefront of antigovernment protests.

"He held them in high esteem," Bitoon said. "He admired them for their courage and their principles."

Bitoon said Glorioso also talked about his deep respect for Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales whom he often described as "a man of principle."

"He liked the way the archbishop confronted the problems," the monsignor said. "While the likes of Cardinal Sin directly confronted the powers that be, his strategy was to help the country by helping the poor."

Liberation theology

But while he encouraged activism among the clergy, Glorioso was also a staunch preserver of the orthodox Catholic faith, Bitoon said.

Glorioso rejected "liberation theology," the Latin American ideology that has been used by some priest to accept violence to fight social injustices, he said.

"Violence was never acceptable to him," Bitoon said. "He always told us that there was always a right way to show your love for your country. There's no need for violence. The Church's teachings were enough to address all our problems."

Bitoon said the old man also condemned the "heresy of activities." It was supposedly common among some priests, especially the new ones, who place their religious obligations second only to their pastoral responsibilities.

"The framework of his life was more on spiritual activities interspersed with pastoral activities," he said. "To him, it should be that pastoral activities should only be a result of the overflowing of spiritual life."

Preach by example

To Glorioso, this meant that before a priest does something else, say meet with parishioners or lead a rally, he should first pray and fulfill his duties to God.

He preached by example.

Throughout his more than seven decades in the priesthood, he imposed on himself strict discipline and followed a rigid, old-fashioned daily schedule common among old clerics.

Glorioso would be up by 5 a.m. for a 20-minute Divine Office followed by a long meditation. Then after a quick breakfast and reading the day's papers, he would be ready for confession.

He was a common figure walking with repenting priests and seminarians at St. Peter's lush grounds. He's nearly deaf but he was surprisingly alert during confessions.

"He sure knew the ways of the soul," Bitoon said. "He was a true priest."

Mobile phones ring: Hello! Hello! Garci!

From page A1

A ring tone of President Macapagal-Arroyo allegedly asking Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to ensure her election victory in 2001 surfaced among users of new models of mobile phones, and was quickly disseminated though infra-red and blue tooth technologies.

The ring tone, which plays for 17 seconds, has the President saying, "Hello! Hello! Hello! Garci" three times and asking, "So, will I still lead by more than one million?"

It starts and ends with the ring of an old phone.

The audio of the controversial wiretap purportedly between the President and Garcillano is reported to have been heavily disseminated through the Internet, while its CD version is selling like hot cakes on the black market.

In Baclaran, Parañaque City, an urban poor group gave out copies of the CD yesterday.

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) distributed an undetermined number of copies of the CD at around 11:15 a.m. to churchgoers who regularly flock to the Redemptorist Church on Wednesdays.

Amid the proliferation of the CD, Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation has directed Jose Justo Yap, the chief of the NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division, to investigate the matter.

"Mere possession of wiretapped materials is a violation of the law," Wycoco said.

As for reports that the CDs were sold at P5 each, Wycoco said it actually cost manufacturers P6 to P11 to make the CDs. "Somebody is obviously spending money to give these away."

The Department of Justice acknowledges that it is hard to stop something that travels through thin air. But it says the possession and spread of the ring tone were against the law.

"They are liable under the law," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said of mobile phone users keeping or spreading the ring tone.

Gonzalez earlier warned people that the possession and dissemination of CDs showing that Ms Arroyo had pressed for the rigging of the presidential election violated the Anti-Wire Tapping Act of 1965.

Pointless

But he said it was pointless to go after millions of mobile phone users, the same way it was impractical to go after hundreds of thousands of jueteng bettors, collectors and operators.

"I told you already that nobody can control somebody from doing something that he wants to do whether it is against the law or not," Gonzalez said when asked repeatedly whether the DOJ was going after those spreading the ring tone.

But he said the DOJ may go after those who created the ring tone.

"Whenever there is a violator, they can always be subjected to investigation," the secretary said.

Apart from the impracticality of going after mobile phone users, Gonzalez said there was the danger of getting everybody more interested in the ring tone by prohibiting its use.

Dilemma

He said the matter has placed the DOJ in a dilemma.

"One school of thought, and I think many of you will agree with that, is that the more you entertain these things, the more it would whet the appetite," he said.

"On the other hand, if you do not enforce the law, you are also accused of being inutile, that the government is weak. We have to balance this. We are studying the balance," he added.

Gonzalez said the DOJ would not go after mobile phone firms for the spread of the ring tone.

Asked whether he believed it was Ms Arroyo who was speaking on the tape, Gonzalez said: "I am not a voice expert. Yes. Yes. To some extent. But I will never admit that that is the President (speaking)."

But then, he said it was easy to mimic someone, as shown by some people who can impersonate the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Distributors elude police

Churchgoers told the Parañaque police that the group was at the church's entrance when it distributed the copies.

"When we arrived at the (Baclaran) church, the group was no longer there," Senior Insp. Harry Dineros told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Around 20 copies were given out, he estimated, as the distribution only lasted for around 5 minutes.

But he declined to confirm if the CDs distributed were indeed copies of the audio tape of the President's alleged conversation with Garcillano.

"A concerned citizen called us up and told us about the situation," he said, adding that the police immediately responded.

But they had to walk to the church due to the traffic. The police station is about 200 meters from the church.

A pack of churchgoers and even some members of the media crowded the entrance, making it harder for the police to get through, he said.

But he said the concern of the police was the heavy traffic caused by the distribution of the CDs.

"It's not against the law to distribute goods, so we can't confiscate the copies or arrest the group," Dineros said. *With a report from Margaux Ortiz*

Kidnapping case tied to poll fraud

From page A1

started on May 17, but it was not until May 26 that a voice that sounded like Ms Arroyo's made a call to the man.

Garcillano's?

Demetriou, who had listened to the tapes, said she was "positive it's Garcillano's voice."

She said she would know his voice because Garcillano was a Comelec regional director in Mindanao while she was chair of the poll body in 1999.

The taped conversation on May 31 at 11:17 p.m. had a female voice inquiring about a teacher from Tawi-tawi whom she heard was in the custody of the opposition.

In a conversation with a certain "Boy" on June 5, the man was informed that "Rashma Hali was already in Manila."

The Comelec official from Tipo-Tipo could not be contacted on her cell phone, Boy said.

Bargaining chip

Boy suggested that the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines be asked to locate Hali or that her family in Zamboanga be kidnapped as a "bargaining chip."

"*Maghanap ka lang 'yung* well-meaning *na kamag-anak nya. 'Wag mo munang pakikidnap yung pamilya.* Soft touch *muna na puwedeng maka*-persuade *sa kanya*," Garcillano was said to have told Boy.

Two days later, it was allegedly the President herself who phoned the man about the whereabouts of Hali. In that conversation, Garcillano supposedly assured the President that he would find Sali.

"That's what I'm being fearful about. *Kung si Rashma Hali 'yun*, that's why we're asking people to look for her so that we can control her," the male voice said.

On June 18, the PNP announced that it was filing charges against Demetriou and Rodriguez for the illegal detention of Sali and her two children.

"Until today, I still have to see the charge sheet," Demetriou told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Hali's affidavit

Demetriou said Hali came to see her on June 3 to report about electoral fraud in Tipo-tipo.

Demetriou brought Sali to a prosecutor in Makati City to file an affidavit and to have a video taken of the proceedings.

"As a trial lawyer, I anticipated a situation wherein she would be forced to make a retraction and turn the tables on me," Demetriou said. Her apprehension turned out to be true.

The case of Hali, however, was just one of the topics on tape supposedly discussed by Garcillano and the President.

Relief of Gudani

If authenticated, the tapes could provide a context to the relief of Marine Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani in Lanao del Sur, the "absence without official leave" of Navy Capt. Felix Angue of Tawi-tawi, and the cliffhanger win of Sen. Rodolfo Biazon over Sen. Robert Barbers.

The tapes allegedly showed how closely Ms Arroyo monitored the canvassing. She was said to have called up "Garci" minutes after it was discovered that the ballot boxes from Camarines Norte were empty.

The boxes were opened at about 9 p.m. on June 1, and a woman whose voice sounded like Ms Macapagal's called up "Garci" about the empty ballot boxes at 9:43 p.m. of the same day.

Rumors about the wiretapped conversation between the President and Garcillano have been going around in media circles and in Manila coffee shops since the middle of May.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye virtually confirmed the rumors when he released two tapes—one "original" and one "spliced"—on June 6, ostensibly to preempt an opposition plot to use the tapes in efforts at ousting Ms Arroyo.

In making the tapes public, Bunye confirmed that it was Ms Arroyo talking to a political adviser named "Gary." Garcillano has denied that the man's voice on the tape was his. Bunye expressed doubts that it was the President's voice on the tape the day after his announcement.

On June 9, opposition lawyer Alan Paguia released two tapes of the alleged conversation between the President, Garcillano, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and Barbers.

A day later, Samuel Ong, a former National Bureau of Investigation deputy director, announced that he had the "mother of all tapes" allegedly showing how Ms Arroyo rigged the presidential elections in 2004.

GMA to visit …

From page A1

"She will be leaving Monday morning and coming back Monday afternoon."

In what could be her quickest trip ever during her four-year stay in office, Ms Arroyo will meet Hong Kong business leaders, including Airport Authority Chair Victor Fung, who will host a luncheon in her honor.

Bunye said Ms Arroyo would also meet with her anticorruption adviser, Tony Kwok, former head of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption. Kwok has begun a European-funded project to fight corruption in 16 key government offices in the Philippines.

The President plans to visit several major Asian financial and business hubs, like Singapore and Tokyo, to promote investment opportunities in the Philippines. During these trips, Ms Arroyo will seek to highlight achievements made under her economic reform program.

"The message is that things are OK in the Philippines," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in his weekly news conference. "There is still a good climate for investments."

Ms Arroyo, who has been accused of cheating in last year's presidential election and whose family has been linked to illegal gambling payoffs, will be back Monday afternoon to welcome Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at the start of his two-day state visit to the Philippines. *Reports from Christine O. Avendaño, AP and AFP*

NTC cautions broadcasters on airing tape

By Clarissa S. Batino and Philip C. Tubeza

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas have agreed to tone down the airing of the controversial taped conversation purportedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

This came after a meeting between the two groups Tuesday night wherein the Commission assured the broadcast organization that it was not imposing censorship.

"The supposed wiretapped tapes should be treated with sensitivity and handled responsibly, giving due consideration to the processes being undertaken to verify and validate the authenticity and actual content," said the NTC and the KBP in a joint statement.

The KBP branded as an "assault on press freedom" the call of the NTC on Saturday for radio and television stations to ban the airing of the alleged wiretapped conversation between Ms Arroyo and a member of the Commission on Elections.

"[The] NTC respects and will not hinder freedom of the press and the right to information on matters of public concern. KBP and its members have always been committed to the exercise of press freedom with high sense of responsibility and discerning judgment of fairness and honesty," said the NTC and the KBP.

The NTC clarified that contrary to the KBP's earlier perception, it had not issued a new circular clamping down on the broadcast firms.

"What is being asked by the NTC is that the exercise of press freedom is done responsibly," the commission said.

The commission only stressed that there were existing memorandum circulars on programming that radio and television operators must comply with.

The NTC said Saturday it would not hesitate to revoke permits of radio and television stations that were aiding and abetting campaigns to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

Solis, an appointee of Ms Arroyo, urged broadcasters to be responsible, fair and honest.

In the House of Representatives, some legislators ordered the NTC to explain its "gag order" to media playing the controversial audio tape.

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of the congressional investigation of audio tape, directed the NTC to explain after House Minority Leader Francis Escudero challenged the order's legality.

"I would like them to answer a basic question regarding the supposed order they issued threatening or banning the airing of the tape in various media organizations. If (it does) not (contain) a wiretapped conversation, I question the legal basis of the issuance of the order," Escudero said.

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Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Memo implicates Annan in UN contract

UNITED NATIONS—A newly disclosed memo appeared to cast doubt on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's insistence he was unaware of a bid by a Swiss firm that employed his son for a lucrative contract under the scandal-tainted UN oil-for-food program.

UN-appointed investigators were "urgently reviewing" the memo, Michael Holtzman, a spokesman for the Independent Inquiry Committee led by former US Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker, said on Tuesday.

The memo described a late-November 1998 Paris meeting of Annan with officials of Cotecna Inspection Services, just weeks before the Geneva-based company won the contract.

The contract has become a focus of Annan's critics, including several US Republican lawmakers who have accused him of mismanagement and called for his resignation.

Chief UN spokesperson Fred Eckhard said Annan had no recollection of any such meeting during the trip to Paris, for a summit of French-speaking world leaders.

Annan's son, Kojo Annan, was a Cotecna consultant at the time of the encounter described in the memo, but it was unclear whether Kojo was present at the encounter. The document was written by Michael Wilson, a family friend of the Annans who was at the time a senior Cotecna executive.

ANNAN

The one-page Dec. 4, 1998, e-mail, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, was addressed to top Cotecna executives and devoted just two sentences to the UN contract matter.

It stated: "We had brief discussions with the SG and his entourage. Their collective advise (sic) was that we should respond as best as we could to the Q&A session of the (sic) 1-12-98 and that we could count on their support."

The memo was first disclosed by the New York Times.

Annan, in Paris on Tuesday, "has no recollection of any such exchange," Eckhard told reporters.

A view that the United Nations would support Cotecna's bid "could not have come from the secretary general because he had no knowledge that Cotecna was a contender for that contract," the spokesperson said.

Cotecna officials later attended a question-and-answer session on the UN bidding in New York on Dec. 1, 1998—the meeting the memo was apparently referring to. Wilson, in a second memo obtained by Reuters, said the session went well.

"Our chances of getting the contract are very good. We presented a sound technical tender competitively priced. With the active backing of the Swiss Mission in New York and effective but quite (sic) lobbying within the diplomatic circles in New York, we can expect a positive outcome to our efforts," Wilson wrote. *Reuters*

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Police crack down on child porno across Europe

THE HAGUE—Police across Europe swooped down on dozens of locations Tuesday and arrested more than 20 suspects in a vast operation against an online child pornography network, the largest of its kind ever coordinated by the European police organization, Europol.

"Around 150 addresses of a wide range of people suspected of being involved with child pornography were searched (Tuesday) morning," Europol said in a press release.

The raids, code-named Icebreaker, were launched simultaneously in 13 countries after a six-month probe that started with a tip-off from a child defense group.

Europol director Max-Peter Ratzel said he hoped they "will lead the investigators to some of the producers behind these evil deeds."

At least 23 people were arrested, and police seized large quantities of equipment including computers, laptop computers, videos and other material containing images of child abuse, mostly of young boys and girls from eastern Europe and southeast Asia.

Most suspects are subject to further investigation, according to Europol.

Members of the network downloaded and exchanged pictures of molested children. Europol did not say whether the investigation targeted child sex consumers or producers or both.

Depending on their country of residence, suspects could be jailed from one month up to three years for possession of child pornography and up to 10 years for distribution of child-sex images.

Police forces from Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden were involved in the operation, code-named "Icebreaker" which was led by the Italian police. *AFP*

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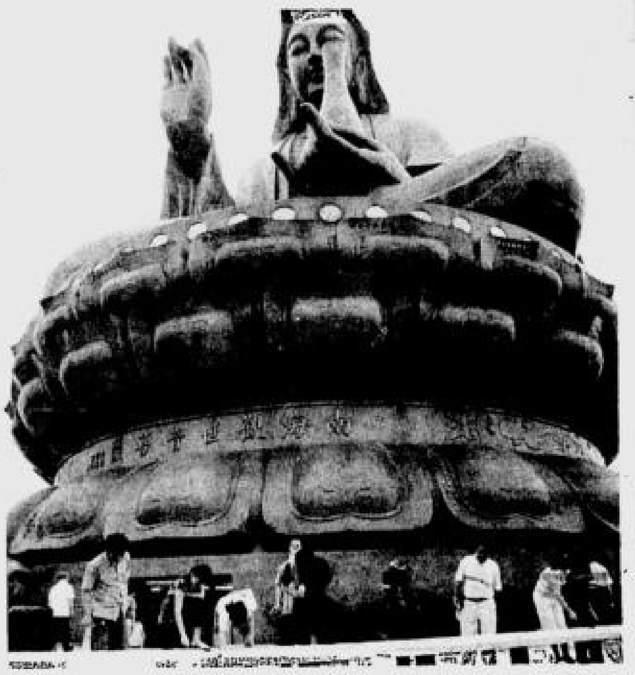

RELIGIOUS ICON
Worshippers feed carps along a moat at the base of a statue of Guanyin, the goddess of mercy, on top of the Xiqiao hill in Foshan, southern China's Guangdong province. Hundreds of worshippers climb 260 meters daily to the top of the hill. AFP

Jackson won't share bed again with boys, says lawyer

LOS OLIVOS, California— Michael Jackson recovered at his Neverland Ranch Tuesday after his stunning acquittal on child sex charges, but his lawyer said the pop star would never share his bed with boys again.

Physically and mentally exhausted, the 46-year-old King of Pop prayed and rested to regain the strength to re-launch the legendary musical career he put on hold during his marathon trial, friends and family said.

"Michael is fine. He is inside," father Joe Jackson said as he left the ranch that was besieged by an army of journalists and television crews who set up satellite trucks, generators and even portable toilets at the gates.

Jackson drove straight back to the sprawling California estate Monday after jurors cleared him of sexually molesting a 13-year-old cancer survivor, using alcohol to seduce him and conspiring to hold him and his family captive.

In his first public statement following his acquittal, Jackson on Tuesday thanked loyal fans who stood by him during his gruelling four-month trial.

"Thank you to my family, friends and fans for all your love and support," read a statement that flashed up for barely a second on the star's website. "I will never forget I love you all. Michael."

Fans around the world celebrated the dramatic finale, which the website likened to the 1990 release of South African political prisoner and future president Mandela, the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and the 1929 birth of civil rights leader Martin Luther King.

"The truth runs marathons," it said.

But Jackson emerged from the victory frail.

"He's relaxing with his family and recouping after all he's been through," said Kevin McLin, a family friend and occasional spokesperson.

Jackson's flamboyant lead attorney Thomas Mesereau said the singer will need time to recover from his ordeal, and will become more reclusive to shield himself from renewed attacks.

While condemning the prosecution case, Mesereau said Jackson was determined never to be exposed again to pedophile accusations, which were fueled by the superstar's own admission that he liked sharing his bed with children.

"He is not going to do that any more because of the false charges that have been brought here," Mesereau told NBC television.

"Michael is a very kind hearted, child-like person. He has been too nice to too many people, he has let a lot of people come freely into his life and home and that is going to change," Mesereau said. "He is not going to make himself vulnerable to this any more."

Brother Jermaine Jackson said the pop star would eventually go back to the music industry.

"Right now he's going to rest but you know, it's in his blood, in his bones," Jermaine Jackson told CNN television.

In a sign of Jackson's rehabilitation, the organizer of next month's Live8 charity concerts said he would "consider" letting the famed entertainer perform if the American singer volunteers.

However, promoter Harvey Goldsmith, who is assembling the bill for the July 2 shows in London, Philadelphia, Paris, Rome and Berlin, said Jackson was probably not in a fit state to play live.

Mesereau confirmed Jackson needed rest.

Jackson's attorney also lashed out at the prosecution for what he termed "the mean spirited" way it led the case. *AFP*

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DATE	SUBJECT	CREDIT HOURS*	LECTURERS
02 July	Responsibilities and Liabilities of Lawyers (*Ethics*)	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Jose L. Sabio, Jr.
	Special Purpose Vehicle Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (*MCLE Prescribed*)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Atty. Ma. Rosario Bernaldo
09 July	Rules on the Declaration of Nullity of Marriage, Annulment and Legal Separation; Provisional Orders, Adoption and Related Rules (*Procedural Law*)	Three (3) (9:00-2:00)	DCA Zenaida N. Elepano
	Pre Trial and Trial Skills	Four (4))1:00-5:00)	Justice Lucas P. Bersamin
16 July	Problem Areas in Legal Ethics	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
	Updates in Administrative Law and Procedure (*Substantive and Procedural Law*)	Three (3) (1:00-4:00)	Prof. Salvador T. Carlota
-	ADR at the Workplace (*ADR*)	Two (2) (4:15-6:15)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
23 July	Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy in Appellate Practice	Four (4) (8:00-12:00)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez
	International Law	Two (2) (1:00-3:00)	Prof. Merlin M. Magallona
	Developments in ADR	Three (3) (3:15-6:15)	Prof. Alfredo F. Tadiar
30 July	Updates in Civil Procedure (*Procedural Law*)	Three (3) (9:00-12:00)	Prof. Marvic MV Leonen
	Reforms in Land Registration (*MCLE Prescribed*)	Three (3) (1:30-4:30)	Prof. Ramon N. Casanova

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Rumsfeld defends Guantanamo

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Tuesday defended the Guantanamo prison against critics who want it closed by saying US taxpayers have a big financial stake in it and no other facility could replace it.

RUMSFELD

Separately, two leading Senate Republicans said the prison for foreign terrorism suspects at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, had created an image problem for the United States, but did not call for it to be closed.

"I think the key to this is to move the judicial process forward so that these individuals will be brought to trial for any crime that they are accused of rather than residing in Guantanamo facility in perpetuity," Arizona Sen. John McCain said.

Asked to explain the advantage of keeping the Guantanamo prison rather than starting over somewhere else, Rumsfeld told a Pentagon briefing, "I don't know any place where we have infrastructure that's appropriate for that sizable group of people. The investment's been made."

The United States holds about 520 detainees from more than 40 countries at the Guantanamo prison camp, which it opened in January 2002 after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on America. Many have been held for more than three years. Only four have been charged.

Rumsfeld said US taxpayers have invested more than $100 million in military construction for the Guantanamo prison, and taxpayers are spending $90-$95 million annually to operate it.

"The United States government, let alone the US military, does not want to be in the position of holding suspected terrorists any longer than is absolutely necessary," Rumsfeld said. "But as long as there remains a need to keep terrorists from striking again, a facility will continue to be needed."

"The real problem is not Guantanamo Bay," Rumsfeld said.

"The problem is that, to a large extent, we are in unexplored territory with this unconventional and complex struggle against extremism. Traditional doctrines covering criminals and military prisoners do not apply well enough."

"They're not common car thieves," Rumsfeld said of the Guantanamo prisoners. "They're believed to be determined killers."

Rumsfeld's comments came a day after Vice President Dick Cheney defended the prison in the face of criticism from human rights activists and some lawmakers—mostly Democrats but a few Republicans, too. Former President Jimmy Carter and others have called for the camp's closure.

Critics have decried the indefinite detention of Guantanamo prisoners, who the United States has denied rights accorded under the Geneva Conventions to prisoners of war.

An FBI memo has accused Pentagon personnel at Guantanamo of using "torture techniques," and the Pentagon recently detailed five cases in which US jailers "mishandled" the Koran.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee said, "I believe absolutely that we should not shut it down."

"Yes, there is an image challenge that we have that centers on Guantanamo, an image challenge that we have with Abu Ghraib," Frist said, referring to the prison in Iraq where US forces abused and sexually humiliated prisoners.

"And if reforms or new actions need to be taken, we will do it. But to cut and run because of image problems is the wrong, wrong thing to do." *Reuters*

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Request for application forms by post from the Singapore Embassy must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope (at least 16cm by 23cm). The envelopes should be marked 'ASEAN Scholarships for the Philippines' at the top left-hand corner.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to sit for a selection test in August and attend an interview in September 2005. Successful candidates will arrive in Singapore in early November to attend a Mathematics bridging course before joining Singapore schools in January 2006.

More information on the scholarship and request for application forms can be obtained through our website at: http://www.moe.gov.sg/aseanscholarships/

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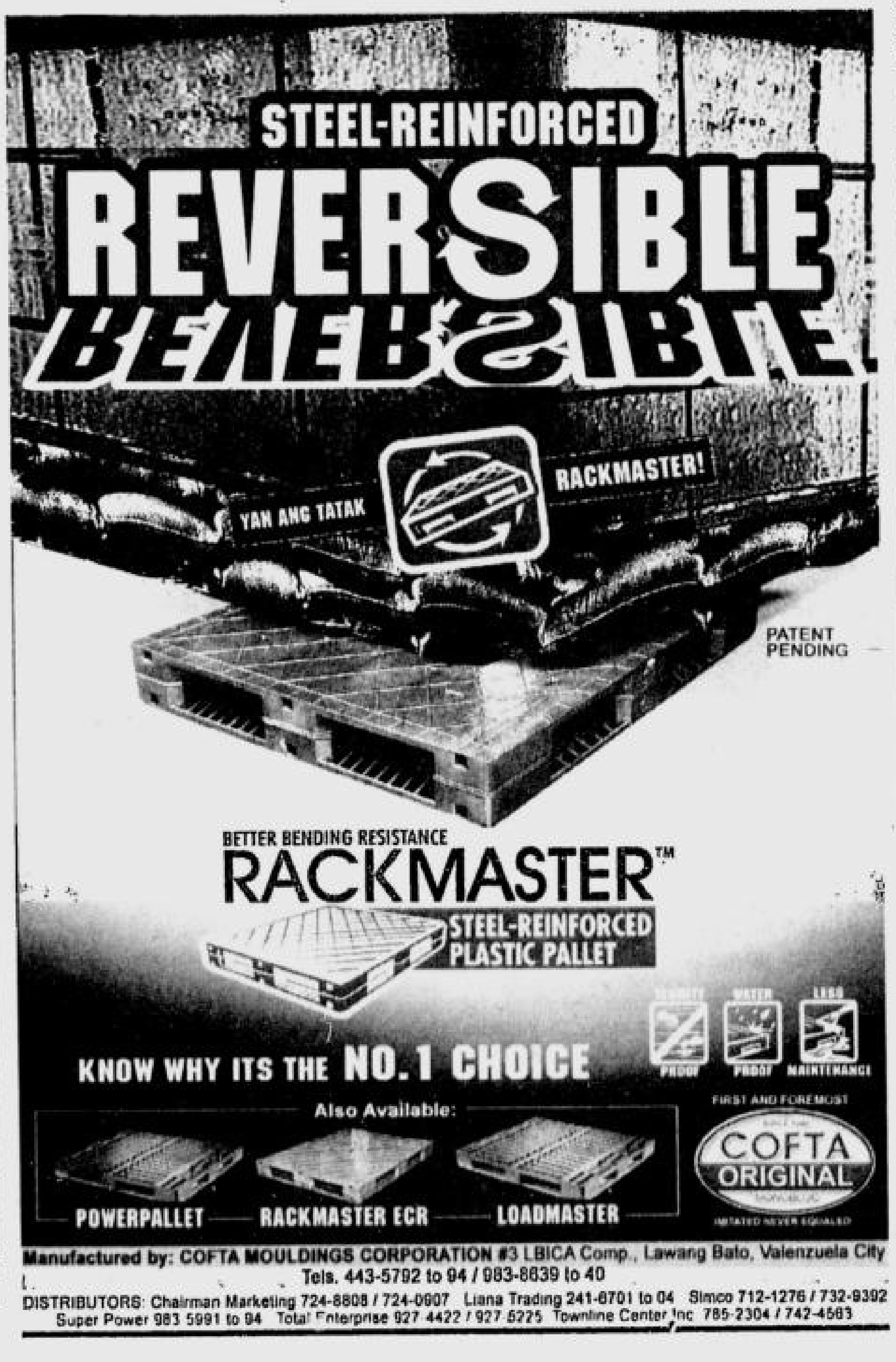

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LARGEST SETTLEMENT

JP Morgan to pay $2.2-B to Enron investors

NEW YORK—JP Morgan Chase & Co. said on Tuesday it had agreed to pay $2.2 billion to investors of collapsed energy firm Enron Corp. in what lawyers said could end up being the largest-ever US securities settlement.

JP Morgan Chase, the No 3. US bank, announced its settlement just four days after Citigroup Inc. said it would pay $2 billion to Enron stock and bond investors who accused the banks of helping Enron in a huge accounting fraud.

The Citigroup settlement with lead plaintiff, the board of regents of the University of California, had been expected to trigger settlements from some of the other 11 financial firms involved with Enron, which collapsed in December 2001.

"The noose is tightening around the necks of the other defendants. Stay tuned," William Lerach, the lawyer representing the University of California, said.

He expected the final figure to exceed the $6.1 billion that over a dozen Wall Street banks agreed to pay to settle allegations they didn't adequately examine WorldCom Inc.'s financial health when they sold securities in 2000 and 2001.

Neither Citigroup, the world's largest financial services company, nor JP Morgan Chase admitted any wrongdoing in agreeing to settle the Enron suit but both said they wanted to put outstanding litigation behind them.

JP Morgan Chase said it will take a pretax charge of $2 billion against its second-quarter earnings to pay the settlement and increase its litigation reserves.

The bank has already warned its trading results in the quarter may be the weakest reported in some time, hurt by bets made with its own cash and dismal markets.

It said it settled to eliminate the "uncertainties, burden and expense of further protracted litigation."

President and Chief Operating Officer Jamie Dimon is known to want to resolve outstanding litigation issues quickly so the New York firm can move forward without legal uncertainties.

The class-action settlement must be approved by the Board of Regents of the University of California and JP Morgan board.

So far financial institutions have agreed to pay Enron shareholders $4.7 billion. As well as the Citigroup and JP Morgan settlements, Bank of America has agreed to pay $69 million and Lehman Brothers $222.5 million.

Other institutions involved include Barclays Plc, Credit Suisse First Boston, Merrill Lynch, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Toronto Dominion Bank, Royal Bank of Canada, Deutsche Bank AG and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Lerach declined to say if other settlement talks are ongoing.

"But I don't think there is any question the final amount will be in excess of the $6.1 billion (for WorldCom) and the largest securities settlement ever," said Lerach.

JP Morgan Chase said it would add about $2 billion to its litigation reserves, of which about half was associated with Enron-related matters and the balance its estimate of expected additional costs associated with the remaining legal actions.

JP Morgan's reserves stood at about $3.5 billion after being boosted by the bank after it agreed to pay $2 billion to settle the WorldCom litigation, said Merrill Lynch.

Enron filed for bankruptcy after its use of off-balance sheet deals to hide tens of billions of dollars in debt were revealed. Its meltdown sparked a flurry of shareholder lawsuits and some criminal charges against the company and management.

Former Enron chair Ken Lay and ex-chief executive Jeffrey Skilling are scheduled to go on trial in January 2006.

The energy trader emerged from bankruptcy proceedings last year as a private entity which is in the process of liquidating remaining assets to pay off part of its debts. *Reuters*

Major quake off California triggers brief tsunami alarm

LOS ANGELES—A major earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck off the coast of California on Tuesday, triggering a brief tsunami warning along the US West Coast, seismologists said.

But while the large temblor rattled nerves along the earthquake-prone coast from Mexico to Canada, there were no immediate reports of any damage or injuries and authorities said there was no threat of a tsunami.

The quake struck 10 km beneath the Pacific Ocean, 146 km west-southwest of the California coastal town of Crescent City at 7:50 p.m., according to the US Geological Survey.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC), a US government-funded body that monitors tidal waves in the Pacific Ocean only, issued a warning that a tsunami might be on the way, but quickly canceled it.

A giant tsunami hit Crescent City in 1964 following a massive earthquake in Alaska, killing 11 people destroying 29 city blocks.

Witnesses felt buildings shaking along the California coast but there were no immediate reports of damage, according to reports, while CNN reported that low-lying areas of Crescent City were briefly evacuated.

"No destructive Pacific-wide tsunami threat exists based on historical earthquake and tsunami data," the PTWC said.

"However, earthquakes of this size sometimes generate local tsunamis that can be destructive along coasts located within a hundred kilometers of the earthquake epicenter.

"Authorities in the region of the epicenter should be aware of this possibility and take appropriate action," the warning center said.

Seismologists said the latest quake was located 480 km northwest of California's capital Sacramento, which lies north of San Francisco.

A major earthquake off the southern shore of Indonesia on Dec. 26 triggered tsunamis that killed about 217,000 people in 11 countries.

The Americas have been hit by a series of quakes in the last day, including a 7.9 earthquake that jolted northern Chile on Tuesday killing 11 people, according to authorities. *AFP*

Britain, France still at odds over EU budget

PARIS—Britain and France failed on Tuesday to resolve major differences over the European Union's long-term budget, leaving the bloc facing financial deadlock as well as a political crisis over its Constitution.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said it was hard to see how the differences could be bridged after talks with French President Jacques Chirac, dimming hopes of an agreement on the 2007-2013 budget at an EU summit on Thursday and Friday.

"The meeting I've just had with President Chirac was immensely amicable but obviously there's sharp disagreement," Blair told a news conference after meeting Chirac at the president's Elysee Palace.

"I think it is difficult to see these differences being bridged, but of course you know we continue to talk," he said.

France and other EU member states want Britain to compromise over its annual budget rebate from EU coffers.

Blair has signaled he might compromise if France gives ground on the big EU farm subsidies it receives. Paris has rejected this.

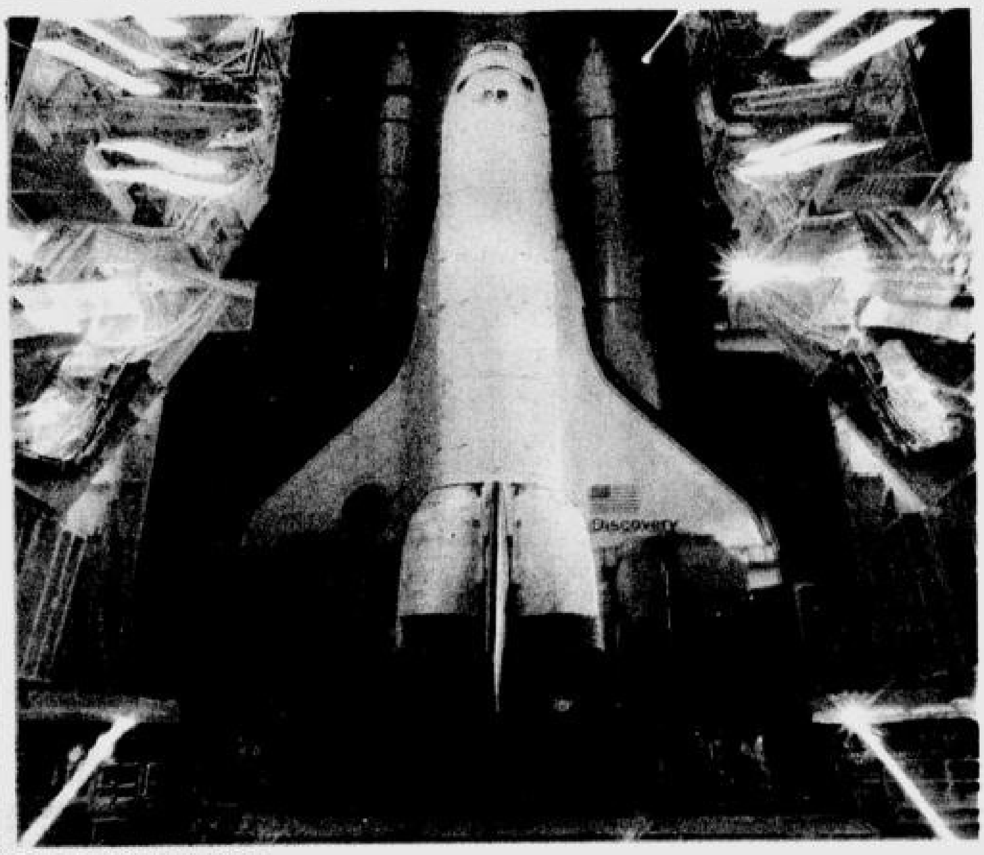
Failure to reach a deal at the Brussels summit could leave the EU facing financial turmoil, adding to political problems since French and Dutch voters rejected the EU constitution—intended to help the enlarged bloc work smoothly.

A delay in securing a budget deal would put in jeopardy urgently needed public investment in the EU's new member states which used to be in the communist bloc.

Chirac did not speak to reporters after meeting Blair but a spokesperson said the president wanted a "reasonable and fair" deal in which each member state must assume its responsibilities.

Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker met Blair in Luxembourg on Tuesday morning to try to broker a deal in time for the summit and before Britain takes over the EU's presidency from Luxembourg on July 1.

Asked what would happen if no deal were reached by that time, Blair said: "I don't think it will send us into crisis at all, provided we get the right answer eventually." *Reuters*



RETURN TO FLIGHT

The space shuttle Discovery rolls out of the Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) with its upgraded external fuel tank at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, June 15. Nasa hopes to make a launch date of no earlier than July 13 for a mission to the International Space Station. REUTERS

S. Africa's Mbeki fires deputy over graft case

CAPE TOWN—South African President Thabo Mbeki sacked his graft-tainted deputy Jacob Zuma on Tuesday in a step seen boosting Africa's declared drive against corruption.

The move came amid rising tensions within the ruling African National Congress (ANC), removing a widely popular politician whom many had expected to succeed Mbeki in 2009.

"I've come to the conclusion that... it will be best to release honorable Jacob Zuma from his responsibilities as deputy president of the republic and member of the Cabinet," Mbeki told a special joint session of parliament.

Mbeki had been accused of foot-dragging on Zuma after the deputy president's former financial adviser Schabir Shaik was convicted of corruption and fraud this month.

The judge's ruling implicated Zuma and said the pair's relationship was "generally corrupt," sparking calls for Zuma to resign.

Zuma, popular with the ANC rank and file as well as its trade union and Communist allies, had refused to step down. He insisted he had committed no crime and had not been tried in a court of law.

But Mbeki called time on the standoff on Tuesday in a move analysts across the continent said showed he was ready to deal firmly with corruption, a vexing subject for international donors, lenders and companies looking to invest in Africa.

"It's a defining moment for South African democracy, and it reaffirms South Africa as Africa's last great hope. He showed great leadership," said John Stremlau, head of international relations at Johannesburg's University of the Witwatersrand.

Stremlau said the move would boost Mbeki's standing when he meets leaders of the most industrialized countries at next month's G8 summit at Gleneagles in Scotland.

"He (Mbeki) is showing the international community that he walks the talk," said Sipho Seepe, political analyst and director of studies at Henley Management College.

Zuma himself was not in parliament. He told journalists later he accepted the decision but added: "I have been tried by the media and in effect found guilty by a court in absentia."

Former president Nelson Mandela said he was "deeply saddened" for Zuma but agreed with Mbeki's decision.

"We fully support the president in these difficult times, in the life of our organization, nation and government," he said.

Analysts said Mbeki's decisive action would be viewed as supporting South Africa's image and its rand currency.

"It will be seen as the right thing for South Africa...," said Razia Khan, chief economist Africa at the Standard Chartered Bank in London.

Mbeki said he would name a successor later for Zuma, a Zulu he appointed in 1999 and who helped end years of bloodletting between the ANC and the mainly Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party.

Zuma's predicament has sparked speculation over who may succeed him, especially as for the past 50 years the deputy president of the ANC has gone on to be party president.

Analysts say Mbeki may name an interim deputy until the ANC elects new party leaders at a five-yearly congress slated for 2007. For the time being Zuma remains ANC deputy president.

Defense Minster Mosiuoa Lekota, Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, ANC Secretary General Kgalema Motlanthe, Mineralas and Energy Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as well as government spokesperson Joel Netshitenzhe have been cited among possible replacements. *Reuters*

Japan, France to jointly develop new supersonic jet

TOKYO—Japan and France will jointly develop a new supersonic commercial aircraft to succeed the retired Concorde, Japan's trade ministry has said.

Companies from the two countries will invest 100 million yen ($914,000) annually in research over the next three years to build a passenger plane capable of flying faster than the speed of sound, the ministry said in a statement Tuesday.

The cooperation opens the possibility of reducing by almost half the flight time between New York and Tokyo to six hours on an aircraft with about three times the capacity of the Concorde with 300 seats, according to Japanese media reports Wednesday.

The ministry said the two sides will try to resolve the difficulties that had plagued Concorde, including jet-engine noise and high fuel consumption.

Japan has successfully tested an engine that can reach speeds of up to mach 5.5, or more than five times the speed of sound. It offers this technological know-how as well as its research in engines and energy-saving technology, the ministry said.

The French side brings experience from the Concorde, the world's first and only supersonic commercial jet operated by Air France and British Airways, which flew at twice the speed of sound.

"This is truly significant industrial cooperation," Japanese trade minister Shoichi Nakagawa said in the statement. "Bringing their respective advantages together... should lead to the ability to offer highly advanced aircraft and services in the future." *AP*

WE ARE FAMILY

A flamingo mother keeps her recently hatched offspring warm as the father looks on at the San Diego Zoo June 14. Male flamingos share in the parental duties of incubating the egg and feeding the chicks once they hatch. REUTERS

Army deserter visits family in US after 40 years

WELDON, N.C.—A former US Army sergeant who deserted his squad and defected to North Korea 40 years ago returned on Tuesday to the quiet sycamore-lined streets of his native North Carolina, where some residents denounced him as a traitor.

Charles Robert Jenkins flew from Japan with his wife and daughters to Washington Dulles International Airport, his first steps on American soil in more than 40 years.

Relatives drove them in a red passenger van to Jenkins' sister's home in tiny Weldon, North Carolina, where his 91-year-old mother waited.

Now 65 and slightly stooped, Jenkins wore a gray suit and a broad smile as he climbed the steps of the two-story brick home. He said "Of course" he was glad to be home and that it felt "very good" to be back in North Carolina.

"I feel very happy," Jenkins told the assembled camera crews as he posed on the porch with his family. "Thank you especially because some of you came all the way from Japan."

JENKINS

American flags flew along the main business street in Weldon. But residents said emphatically that the flags were to mark Tuesday's Flag Day holiday, not Jenkins' homecoming.

"He should have been shot," said Donald Gregory, shopping at a grocery store in the town of 1,200. "He should never have left his post."

Other residents were more sympathetic, at least toward Jenkins' mother.

"As a parent, I can't imagine not knowing where my child was for all those years," said Marian Edwards, whose husband grew up in Jenkins' hometown of Rich Square. "I feel like he was a traitor but I think he has every right to come home. It's like someone getting out of prison."

Jenkins was a 24-year-old sergeant leading a patrol through the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea when he abandoned his comrades on a cold January night in 1965 and fled to the communist north. He later told a court-martial he defected because he was scared he would have to go to Vietnam.

Jenkins was forced to teach English to young cadets and became part of Pyongyang's propaganda machine. He married Hitomi Soga, one of at least a dozen Japanese citizens abducted and taken to North Korea by its agents decades ago to teach them Japanese.

Soga was allowed to leave North Korea with four other Japanese abductees in 2002 but Jenkins stayed behind with their two daughters for fear of severe punishment by the US military.

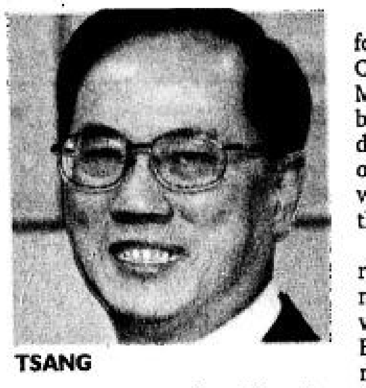
The plight of the former soldier riveted Japan, which asked Washington for leniency for Jenkins due to wide sympathy for Soga, and the family was reunited in Indonesia last July.

Jenkins turned himself in to US authorities in Japan in September and pleaded guilty at court-martial to desertion and aiding the enemy. He was dishonorably discharged and served 25 days in a military jail, then settled with his family on Japan's remote Sado island.

He was expected to spend about a week in North Carolina and said in a statement last week that he looked forward to "catching up on all the years" with his mother and relatives.

"It has been my strong wish for a long time to see my mother again. Thanks to everybody's warm support, I can realize it finally," Jenkins said. *Reuters*

Veteran civil servant Tsang wins HK's leadership race



TSANG

HONG KONG—Veteran civil servant Donald Tsang effectively won Hong Kong's leadership race on Wednesday, filing papers that showed he had the solid backing of an election committee that picks the Chinese territory's leaders.

Tsang trounced his two rivals by collecting 710 of the nominations from the election panel of about 800 people. The other candidates—both lawmakers—conceded days ago they were unable to win the minimum 100 nominations they needed to be placed on the July 10 ballot.

Tsang announced his nomination count shortly after filing with election officials, who would verify the endorsements and announce results Thursday.

"The process was very smooth," Tsang told reporters at his campaign office.

"I feel very excited. I feel I have more responsibilities," he added.

The race was never really a contest for Tsang because his campaign had the biggest advantage: support from Chinese leaders. The election committee is dominated by members loyal to Beijing.

Hong Kong voters were never allowed to directly elect their leaders when the territory was a British colony. Beijing continued to deny them the right when the city returned to Chinese rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula designed to allow a wide-degree of autonomy.

On Wednesday, radical lawmaker Leung Kwok-hung, also known as "Long Hair," protested at Tsang's campaign office, demanding that Hong Kongers be given the right to elect their leaders. He scuffled with security guards and yelled, "Shame on you, Donald Tsang" and "Small-circle election. It's worse than pigs and dogs."

Tsang was the right-hand man for the previous leader, Tung Chee-hwa, who resigned in March citing failing health. Many believe that Beijing lost confidence in Tung and pushed him out to make way for Tsang, who was more experienced in running the city.

Tsang's rivals in the leadership race were pro-democracy lawmaker Lee Wing-tat and ex-convict legislator Chim Pui-chung. Both have complained that the race was unfair because Tsang refused to debate them. But the front-runner said that he would only debate candidates who collected enough nominations to be on the final ballot.

Lee told reporters Wednesday that he only collected 51 endorsements. He alleged that people who showed interest in supporting him were targeted by pro-Beijing organizations that urged them to support Tsang.

"If they show any intention to nominate me, they'll receive many phone calls," he said.

Chim conceded the election was over. "I have no chance of beating my opponent, Mr. Tsang," he said.

The flamboyant, bowtie-wearing Tsang seems like an unlikely success story. A policeman's son, he never went to college. He briefly worked as a pharmaceutical salesman before joining the civil service, where he has worked for nearly 40 years.

He became financial secretary in 1995, the first ethnic Chinese to hold the job in 150 years of British rule. He was named a knight of the British Empire in the final days of British rule—an honor that many thought would doom him if he stayed in government after the handover to China.

During Tung's eight years of rule, Tsang was reputed to be a loyal official who efficiently carried out orders. When Tung resigned, Tsang was the No. 2 ranking official responsible for running the government.

Tsang has had cordial ties with the pro-democracy camp, but it's unlikely he'll push hard for bold political reforms—a move that would quickly sour relations with Beijing. He recently acknowledged in a TV interview that a Hong Kong leader could not be successful without the support of China's central government. *AP*

No
No
No
mpaign! Yellow
ver!

COMFORT WOMEN Former South Korean comfort women, who served the Japanese Army as sex slaves during World War II, shout slogans during a rally in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul Wednesday. The protesters opposed Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Seoul on June 20. AP

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Australia mulls softer migrant detention laws

CANBERRA—Australian Prime Minister John Howard has signaled changes to his tough immigration detention laws as an internal revolt on the issue saw government lawmakers swap public insults on Wednesday.

The row within the conservative government was prompted by a group of four politicians, who promised to introduce legislation to soften the strict mandatory detention laws which have been central to Howard's four consecutive election victories.

Howard met the four backbenchers late on Monday but failed to reach a compromise on changes, prompting one government politician to lash out publicly at her colleagues for creating divisions within the ruling conservative coalition.

"If you spit the dummy because the vast majority of the people in your party won't agree with you and you in effect behave as a political terrorist, well I think you actually lose credibility," politician Sophie Panopoulos told Australian radio.

Australia is a nation built on immigrants but it has one of the world's strictest immigration policies, detaining illegal arrivals, illegal workers and people who overstay, sometimes for years while their cases are heard.

Howard said talks with the four backbenchers would continue in order to head off their private legislation, due to be introduced into parliament next Monday, and he has offered to look at ways to speed up decisions for asylum seekers.

"We're going to keep mandatory detention but there are ways, particularly having in mind the position of children and the time sometimes things take. There are ways we can make it work better," Howard told reporters.

Australia's immigration detention camps, which have been condemned by international human rights groups, have been hit by protests, hunger strikes, riots, escapes and suicide bids as asylum seekers become frustrated at delays in hearing cases.

The government is investigating 201 cases of possible wrongful detention and deportation, uncovered since a mentally ill Australian was mistakenly detained as an illegal immigrant and another held and mistakenly deported to the Philippines. *Reuters*

US optimistic N. Korea would give up nukes

WASHINGTON—The Bush administration, under fire for what critics call its failed North Korea policy, expressed confidence on Tuesday that "one way or another" Pyongyang ultimately would give up its nuclear weapons.

"One way or another they're not going to have these systems," said Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, the top US diplomat dealing with Pyongyang.

"And so the real issue for them is what are the terms under which they'll give them up," he added.

Hill's two-hour appearance before the US Senate Foreign Relations panel kept the focus on unsuccessful US diplomatic efforts to revive six-party negotiations on the North's nuclear program, which Pyongyang has boycotted for one year.

But he reiterated the US position that other options remain under discussion and added a dose of reality to recent optimism that Pyongyang may soon come back to the table.

"North Korea's unwillingness to return to the table casts increasing doubts on how serious it really is about ending its decades-old nuclear ambitions," he said.

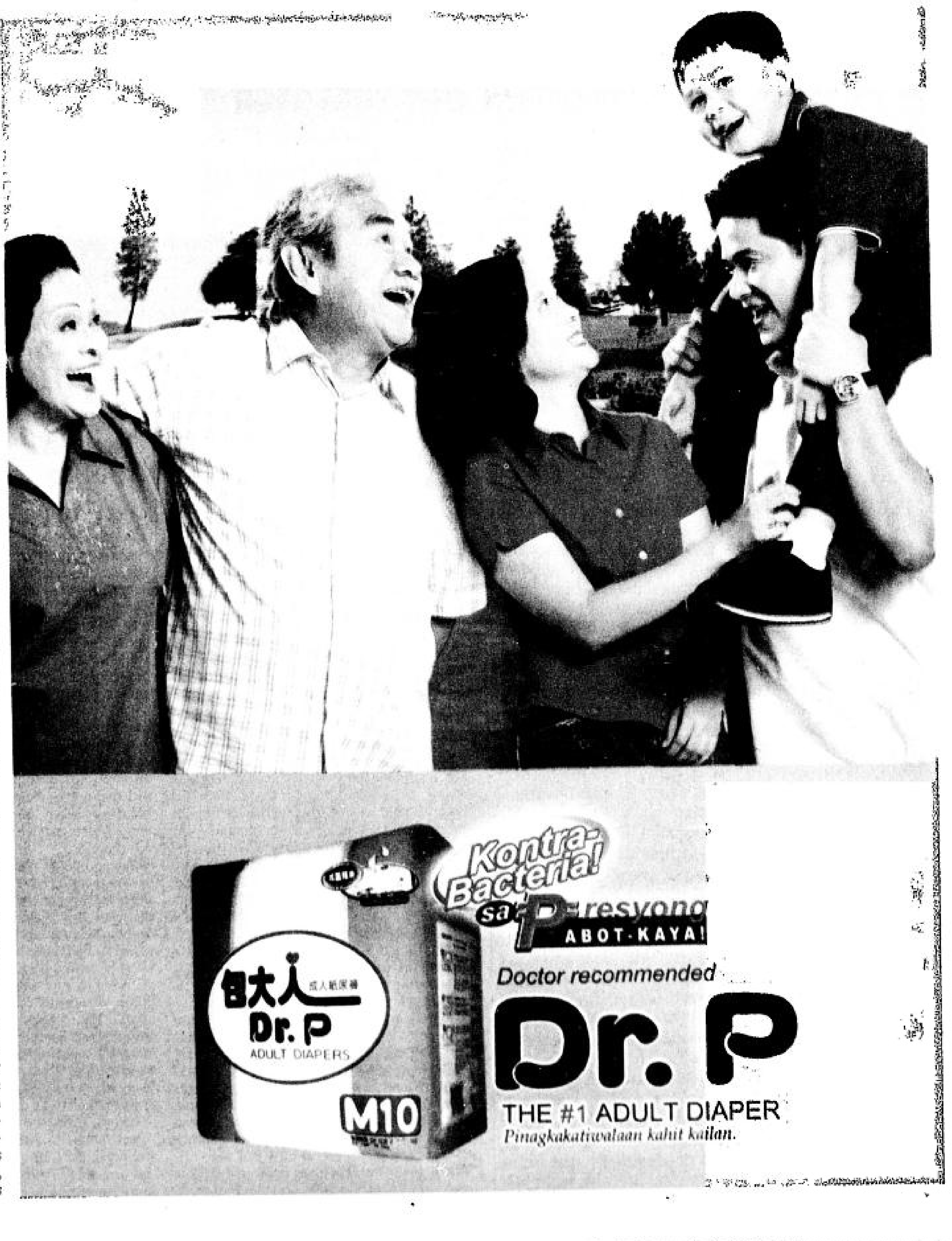
Hill said Pyongyang seems to be "testing our mettle... testing to see whether we're going to get into endless arguments with our partners. They're waiting to see whether we're going to start negotiating with each other and with ourselves to sweeten the pot for them. And so they feel there's some advantage in waiting."

Leading opposition, Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware said US policy was a failure.

The North bore prime responsibility for the nuclear crisis, he said, but "this administration has also made a series of poor choices, in my view, and has not... pursued the policies that stand a realistic chance of mitigating and ultimately reversing North Korea's threat."

On President George W. Bush's watch the North "declared itself a nuclear power, produced enough plutonium to build at least six or eight nuclear weapons, and made vague threats about testing and on the verge of testing a weapon," undermining non-proliferation efforts and confidence in America's ability to ensure peace in Asia, Biden added. *Reuters*

I'm free! Walang hassle basta may Dr. P!



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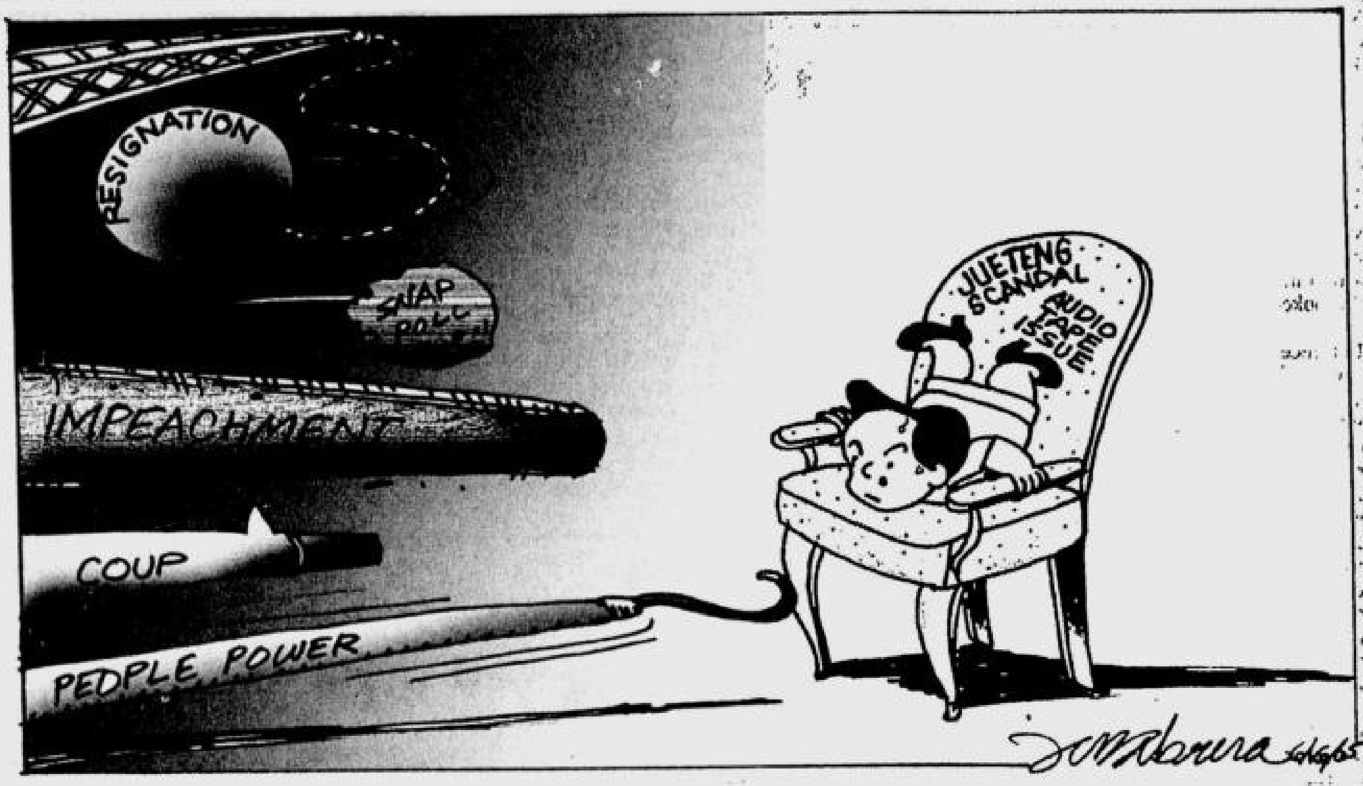

Debt relief

EDITORIAL

IN WHAT has been widely hailed as a historic agreement, the world's richest nations last Saturday canceled $40 billion in debts owed by 18 of the world's poorest nations. During their two-day meeting in London, the finance ministers of the Group of Eight decided to "meet the full cost" of writing off these countries' debts from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank. Nine other countries will qualify for similar debt relief within the next 18 months, after which 11 more will be included in the list, bringing the total debt write-off to $55 billion.

Officials of the countries which stand to benefit from the program have generally welcomed the agreement, although some complained that it was too little and too late. Rock singer Bono, who has been in the forefront of the international campaign for international debt relief, said the deal was "a little piece of history," but conceded that "millions of lives will be changed by the news."

That is understating it a bit. Millions of Africa's starving people will be saved by lifting the debt burden, which has greatly slowed down the efforts of these countries to develop. Many more will survive and even live more comfortable lives if the G-8 would follow it up with other measures, like increasing the level of aid to these poor nations and opening up their own markets to agricultural exports from the same countries.

Before all those things, what the G-8 needs to do is to ensure that the billions saved from debt payments will not merely line the pockets of dictators and other officials of these poor nations. As one analyst has suggested, a mechanism must be put in place "to ensure the savings on debt are spent wisely" because government corruption and inefficiency are "the main factors why these countries remain poor."

The rich nations are aware of this problem and recognize the need to put up safeguards. The United States, for one, had earlier announced that debt relief would be linked to "improving governance, reducing corruption and completing a program with the IMF that demonstrates a commitment to sound economic policy." But while no one will dispute the necessity of improving government efficiency and reducing corruption, there are bound to be problems with regard to IMF prescriptions which have once too often proven ineffective as well as intrusive. Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar said the G-8 debt-relief program "should not be subject to conditionalities that would undermine the sovereignty of a state."

Despite such reservations, not a few nations have come forward to demand that they be counted among the world's poorest nations. Unless the rich nations suffer from a sadistic streak, they should consider expanding the program to include those countries that are being weighed down by a huge debt burden that is getting heavier every year. For while they may not be counted yet among the world's poorest, they are getting there surely and quickly. And this is mainly because servicing their debts take up a huge chunk of their budgets, leaving little for education, health, infrastructure and other development projects.

This is the situation in which the Philippines is caught. With the government indebted to the tune of P3.9 trillion, it has to set aside fully one-third of its P901-billion budget for 2005, or P301.7 billion, just to pay the interest. Take away the share of local governments amounting to P151 billion as well as the salaries of government workers amounting to P290 billion, and all that is left for building roads, schools and other infrastructure is P72 billion. How can a country that invests so little on social and economic development ever move out of the debt trap and move forward?

It may be too much to expect the country's creditors to write off all its debt. If the rich nations were to extend this privilege to every debtor-nation, the IMF, the World Bank and other international financial institutions would probably have to shut down. But now that they have seen the urgency of extending debt relief to the poorest nations, they should also consider a similar program for other heavily indebted nations.

It doesn't have to be a complete write-off. In the Philippines, for instance, a good start would be the condonation of loans tainted with fraud, like the financing for the construction of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that has never been used. That is what's needed to give the country a better shot at development. And it is also what justice demands.

'Dead meat' and sanctuary

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

AN UNEXPECTED issue that spun off from the current wire-tap controversy is "sanctuary in churches."

Former National Bureau of Investigation official Samuel Ong and Isafp's TSgt. Vidal Doble dashed into the normally placid San Carlos Seminary seeking protection. If arrested for flagging wire-tapped tapes "I'd be dead meat," Ong wailed.

Giving shelter and assuring security belong to the Church's "pastoral solicitude," Bishop Bernardo Cortez explained that sanctuary doesn't make the Church "part-sharer of the complaint."

We've been there before. Cloistered Carmelite nuns in Cebu hid Corazon Aquino as fear of assassination arose when people surged into Edsa to denounce the Marcos dictatorship. Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and businessman Mark Jimenez sprinted for Jaime Cardinal Sin's residence. Gunmen failed to rub out Chavit in an ambush. Without a Church shield for testifying against President Estrada, they were "dead meat."

Officials of all political stripes are mistrusted. In contrast, some Church personalities do evoke confidence.

"*Ligtas ka. Sagot kita. Magtiwala ka* (You're safe. You're in my care. Trust me)," Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas told a sweaty Doble, and the wire-tap specialist agreed to return to Camp Aguinaldo. "*Tayo na*," Doble said.

Sanctuary is the area around an altar. But its use as haven goes back 3,000 years. Egyptians, Greeks and Hebrews recognized a religious "right of asylum."

Unlike the "anything-goes" Senate probe of *jueteng*, rules govern sanctuary. England's King Ethelbert set the first regulations in 600 A.D, i.e. what the person does to be protected, extent of refuge, etc.

Westminster Abbey and 21 other churches, by Norman times, had licensed sanctuaries. To be shielded, one had to reach the church (or seminary?). There, he'd ring a bell, cling to a ring or sit on a "frith-stool."

In other places, there were "sanctuary crosses," some a mile from the abbey. "War of the Roses" losers, for example, would head for the nearest sanctuary boundary, until it was safe to emerge.

"Often, it became a race to the boundary between the refugee and officers of the crown"—something like the cops and media speeding after Ong's dash Tuesday to a safe house—only in reverse.

But common law regulated these havens. A refugee had to confess his sins, surrender weapons and obey the rector of his haven. Ong didn't. He fractured a condition imposed for being allowed to huddle in the seminary by giving covert press interviews, calling for a revolt.

Another condition was: Law would be observed. Ong's refuge would last until a warrant for his arrest was served. But in medieval sanctuaries, the refugee had 40 days to choose between confession and surrender to secular authorities.

Confession would be at the church gates, something like whimpering before legislators in the Senate or House elbowing each other for the camera. The refugee would surrender his land to the crown.

Exile followed. "Abjure the realm," they called it.

Is that like seeking a visa from the Syrian Embassy? Like Ninoy Aquino, the refugee couldn't return without the king's permission.

The refugee would leave sanctuary, barefooted and bareheaded. Some limped into the hands of enemies, waiting around the bend. They were "dead meat," falling to "vigilante justice"—a fixture in Cebu and Davao.

Knowing these grim options, some opted to escape before the 40 days were up. (Ong opted for a safe house.) Others stayed put. Since no one could break in, the church would trim food and water rations until a decision was made.

Henry VIII shortened the list of crimes eligible for asylum. And in 1623, James I abolished the system. But the concept of Church protecting people from arbitrary punishment remains. "Go and learn what this means," the Master said. "I will have mercy, not sacrifice."

Sanctuary adapts to current conditions, writes Jim Corbett in "Sanctuary, Basic Rights and Humanity's Fault Lines." Those include people fleeing war, persecutions, famine—or sheer bad government.

In South Africa, Soweto's church honoring the Blessed Lady as "Queen of the World" opened its doors "when all other avenues were closed to the majority of oppressed," former President Nelson Mandela recalls. In Cologne, Germany, the Antonietter Church gave sanctuary to 100 Kurdish refugees.

In Rwanda, Catholic leaders were faulted for failing to use their moral force to provide adequate havens for Tutsis fleeing the 1994 genocide.

"Did the Church really try to make use of its influence?" asks Camille Karangwa in his paper, "Safe Sanctuary—The Role of the Church in Genocide." "Or did it fail to fulfill its duties?" Over a million Tutsis died in that holocaust.

INQUIRER's Manuel Quezon III has written on the asylum the Philippine Commonwealth Government provided for Jewish families fleeing Nazi repression. Other countries then slammed their doors, fearing reprisals.

In advanced countries within the European Union, Canada or the United States, sanctuary clashes stem from waves of refugees who swamp mosques, synagogues or churches.

The faithful don't question government's right to deport illegals, Philip Wheaton writes in "Sanctuary: People Before the Law." Rather, the question is contextual: Is this law more important than these people?

"It is an ethical dilemma because its consequences would be far worse than breaking the law"—concerns which our topple-the-government-at-all-costs sanctuary-seekers scorn.

Triumph of evil

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FIVE years ago, the country was crying out in pain and rage. The leaders of civil society were meeting right and left, culminating in the huge gathering at the Ateneo on Oct. 29, 2000, dubbed Kompil II. It was organized by Code-NGO and Konsyensyang Pilipino and drew in more than 250 organizations, coalitions and networks. It was "the people's response to the deepening crisis in the Philippine society," Kompil said, the immediate cause of which was "incompetence, cronyism and corruption."

Dinky Soliman, Dan Songco and many stalwarts of civil society were there. I know because I was there and saw them there. Later, after Erap was gone, Kompil announced it would "pursue its existence as a movement that will serve as a functional watchdog and an effective fiscalizer and countervailing force for good governance."

The leaders of Edsa were astir as well, protesting the hooliganism of the Erap regime, not least by taking to the streets. Corazon Aquino led a rally in front of the statue of her husband on the anniversary of martial law, the various speakers taking turns in comparing the conditions during Erap's time with those of Marcos' time. Before the rally ended, a hard rain lashed at the crowd, which did not budge however but shielded itself with umbrellas and newspapers. I know because I was there.

Jaime Cardinal Sin was among the first to call for Erap to resign after the Senate failed to open the second envelope, saying Erap's moral right to rule had been completely voided by its moral bankruptcy.

A group of people who had organized themselves into Pagbabago met repeatedly to discuss how to end the regime of lying, cheating and stealing. They counted in their ranks Francis Pangilinan, now a senator who is calling for the hearings on *jueteng* to stop. Some of the meetings, in fact, were held at his and Sharon Cuneta's house in Wack Wack. Yet another prominent figure there, who would soon bitterly regret it, becoming one of the first victims of the GMA administration, was movie director Joey Reyes, who presided over the meetings. Reyes would later have his movie, "Live Show," banned by GMA on the instigation of Sin. But that would happen later. Before that, Reyes was brimming with hope and optimism. I know because I was there.

In one rare occurrence, business actually put its money where its mouth was. It turned out its pockets to oppose Erap. An activist would later tell me the money that went their way was enough to fund three rallies a week. But you could see it patently in the men and women wearing white T-shirts that proclaimed their outrage over Erap and sporting hands that had not known a day's sweaty work distributing packed lunches to the *descamisados* that had descended on Ayala. I know because I was there.

People openly proposed things that would have astounded Raul Gonzalez, who now considers listening to the tape of GMA's conversation with Virgilio Garcillano an act of destabilization. Rolando Librojo, one of those who convened Kompil, said: "We are starting calibrated workers' actions leading to a general strike and the first call is for workers to participate in the rallies. We are also calling for a transport strike outside Metro Manila…We talked about tax boycotts and boycott of the two banks. Equitable PCI could not be included because there was the concern that the Social Security System (a provident fund for employees in the private sector) placed its money there."

Where are all these people now?

Personally I wouldn't mind if they came out and defended GMA. I wouldn't mind if Cory and Sin, Dinky and Dan, Kiko and Matsing, Jose Concepcion and Bill Luz, the group formerly known as Pagbabago and the one that still calls itself Konsensyang Pilipino came out and said the charges against GMA are false and unfair. I wouldn't mind if they said it's not true that she robbed the voters blind; it's not true she made the things that brought Erap down, which are jueteng and corruption, so much worse; it's not true, as the SWS shows, that she has become the worst President since Marcos. At least they would be doing so out of conviction or principle.

But to just slink away and hide under the bed, to quote the late Luis Beltran, it is incomprehensible. No, it is inexcusable. There is something worse than hiding under the bed in the face of a coup. It is hiding under the bed in the face of a threat to self-interest. The one is cowardice, the other plainly sucks.

Is the crisis we face now any less a matter of justice? Is the crisis we face now any less a matter of right and wrong? Is the crisis we face now any less a matter of whether the Filipino lives or dies?

It's more.

GMA stands accused, and with direct evidence to boot, of rigging the elections, the most sacred of the democratic processes. Can anything constitute a higher injustice than thwarting the will of the electorate? But it's more than that. It's more than that a host of grave issues has been raised against GMA, from jueteng to cheating, from turning this country to the second most corrupt country in the world to the most dangerous place in the world for journalists, although any one of them is enough ground to impeach her. It's that her rule has been marked by the systematic destruction of everything this country holds sacred. Never mind democracy, mind only decency. How can the Filipino survive on a daily diet of lying, cheating and stealing? Worse than the destruction of a nation's body is the destruction of a nation's soul.

What kind of values are we teaching the next generation by this vast and terrible silence? The last two Edsas were right to quote Edmund Burke:

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

FVR's lead recalled

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel sounded arrogant in his reaction to the leave of absence of Rep. Mikey Arroyo from the House of Representatives. He said: "Who cares about Mikey…so what? Who cares whether he goes on leave or goes to the mall?" Pimentel added that "it's the President's credibility to govern that's being questioned, not the congressman('s)."

But it's precisely statements like these that may be creating sympathy for President Macapagal-Arroyo among the *masa* (especially the mothers); at the very least, they're frightening people from siding with the opposition. By contrast, GMA must have tugged at many heartstrings when she spoke in an uncharacteristic emotional tone about her eldest son's decision to go on leave. "This is the painful decision of a son intended to ease the sorrow of a mother," she said. Media noted that she really looked quite sad and emotionally burdened.

* * *

In a recent TV program, Dave Celdran pointed out to his guest, former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte, that when FVR won the 1992 elections, his closest rival, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, also ranted that he had cheated her. Up to now Santiago cannot get over that thought, especially since the difference between them was only 800,000 votes, less than GMA's lead of one million votes over FPJ. Celdran was doubtless referring to the "Sulo Hotel operations" allegedly conducted by Almonte and Ronaldo Puno, which was credited for FVR's victory. Celdran asked: How come the protest of Santiago didn't prosper? Almonte replied, "Because there was no tape then."

* * *

This is true. Santiago's protests may just be the rantings of a politically scorned woman, whereas today GMA is up against a concerted opposition determined to return to power by means foul or fair. The margin between FVR and Santiago was the slimmest ever in RP history; yet FVR overcame the allegation that he couldn't govern well because there was a cloud over his victory. In fact, he went on to become one of our most effective presidents.

* * *

Speaking of those tapes, TSgt. Vidal Doble is the Isafp agent who's believed to have wiretapped the alleged conversations between GMA and Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. But after he was "rescued" by his wife Arlene, Doble made a startling revelation. The agent, whom Msgr. Soc Villegas noted to be under duress while in the San Carlos Seminary, denied doing the taping. Instead he claimed that a finished tape was given to him by allies of former NBI deputy director Samuel Ong and that he was just asked to own up to taping it, in return for a juicy job in a revolutionary government that would be set up, presumably following the fall of Ms Arroyo. It remains to be seen if Doble, who has been under interrogation by the AFP, will stick to that story, but his recent testimony is very damaging to Ong's credibility. The question has to be asked why Ong, who had claimed he obtained from the Isafp the "mother of all tapes," had to coerce Doble to own up the tape. Did Ong fake anything else? There are so many conflicting details in this issue of the tapes.

* * *

Last Tuesday, I wrote about the laudable project launched by former Senate President Jovito Salonga to produce a bi-weekly non-political newsletter called "Living News & Good Education" that will contain educational material on Science, Math and English, as well as values formation. Copies of the newsletter will be distributed free to public high school students across the country. I found it quite inspiring that Salonga, who is a bar topnotcher, a Harvard M.A. and a Yale Ph.D. graduate, and three-time Senate topnotcher, does not consider it too trivial to involve himself in preparing instructional materials for high school students.

But Salonga is not working alone on this project. Involved too is a whole team of eminent persons who all wish to help improve the skills of our youth. Also serving on the editorial board are Daniel Agoncillo, nephew of historian Teodoro Agoncillo, as editor; INQUIRER columnist Randy David, social studies advisor; Gonzalo Jurado, professor at Kalayaan College in Marikina, economics advisor; Ramon Miranda, math and science advisor; and Diane Morales, a longtime English professor at the International School, basic English and Filipino advisor. Publishing the newsletter is Solomon Yuyitung, son of Quientin Yuyitung, who was deported to Taiwan by Ferdinand Marcos one year before martial law. The advisory board is chaired by UP president Dr. Emerlinda Roman and its members are three university presidents—former UP president Jose Abueva, now of Kalayaan College, lawyer Roberto P. Laurel of Lyceum of the Philippines, Oscar S. Suarez of Philippine Christian University, and Quentin Doromal, who served as president of Siliman University during martial law.

* * *

Mabigat (heavyweight) are the backers of the newsletter, which was officially launched at the DepEd last June 7. The speakers were Senate President Franklin Drilon, a product of the Philippine public school system, who donated initially P2 million from his pork barrel to fund the newsletter for Cavite province, Education Secretary Butch Abad and Salonga.

I asked Salonga why he thought of this project (at age 85). He replied that he is a product entirely of the public school system and he'd like to ensure that it remains strong and viable for his grandchildren's generation. Salonga confessed he was alarmed at the dismal results of various diagnostic tests and surveys on students of public elementary and high school, which were producing "not only fewer graduates but also illiterate ones." He said his newsletter will function mainly as an instructional material on the core subjects, and help raise the level of literacy of the students "by simply encouraging teachers and students to read."

Ruminations on 'Aba'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THIS might sound petty when compared to the razor-sharp analyses and in-your-face fulmination of the countless political analysts who have sprouted like mushrooms under the political rain clouds of June. But I risk sounding petty.

I don't know if this latest prayer spoof has the tacit "imprimatur" of the Catholic bishops who either have jumped into or have been drawn into the anti- and pro-GMA fracas. One of the text messages going around (I received mine from the head of a known PR agency) is a parody of the "*Aba Ginoong Maria*" (Hail Mary) prayer which damns President Macapagal-Arroyo and her family.

It starts off thus: "*Aba naman Gloria napupuno ka ng grasya…*" I don't want to run the whole "prayer" here lest it offend the sensibilities of Marian devotees. I was surely incensed when I read the texted "prayer" because I think there should be respect for what many consider sacred and profound. I texted back the PR lady to say that even Muslims would be offended by that spoof of a prayer because they also have great regard for the mother of Jesus.

Ms Arroyo could be brought down from her perch in whatever way for all I care if indeed she cheated in the last elections. But her detractors should leave the "*Aba…*" alone. And if the President's congressman-son and congressman brother-in-law indeed accepted *jueteng* payola as their accusers have alleged—and these two presidential kin know they cannot lie to their consciences—then I say to them, *gago pala kayo*. If…that is. If you want to repeat history.

But if you didn't do it, and you can stand before your God and say you're clean, I say, you're not *gago* at all. The truth will prevail.

Also being spread around via text messaging is a joke about former President Estrada and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo going to confession. It's the sacrament of penance in this case.

You don't have to be a Christian or Muslim or Hindu or Parsi or Jain or Buddhist to feel disgusted when something essential to your religious faith is made into a joke to maliciously smear someone. You can heap all the bad jokes on someone you consider obnoxious who might really deserve them, but leave the sacred alone.

This is not different from picking some racial attributes to describe something negative as is often heard in racist or religious jokes. In a lesser degree, this is similar to naming certain animals to describe the worst in human beings. Fortunately for the crocodiles, snakes, crabs, wolves and vultures, they have no way of feeling offended. But the constant maligning has certainly led to the decimation of their species by ignorant humans.

And so now, even the sacred and profound are not spared.

The issue on the desecration of the Koran by US soldiers, which was wrongly reported by Newsweek worldwide (for which the magazine has apologized) and which sparked upheavals and caused deaths in some parts of the Muslim world, demonstrated how reports about malicious disregard for what is held sacred (even if not proven true) could turn volatile. One has to be in the place of the maligned to understand their rage. But then one need not be one of them to fully understand, one need only understand the Golden Rule.

I did write a few weeks ago about the Muslims' rage when they learned from a small erroneous Newsweek report about how their holy book was defiled (allegedly flushed into or placed on the toilet). I may not have agreed with how the resulting outrage was demonstrated and how things turned bloody in some places, but I cannot disagree with the how the Muslims felt. (One reader with an Arabic-sounding name wrote me to calmly point out that extreme reaction was demonstrated only in some parts of the Muslim world, and that it was not correct to picture the entire Muslim world as having overreacted violently. I wrote back to agree.)

I read somewhere that one cannot just say that the Koran is simply words on paper and that nothing in this universe is altered when the holy book is left lying—either carelessly or deliberately—on the wrong places. That it's just a book and what matters is the message it carries. It's not as simple as that.

The same holds true with the Holy Eucharist for the Catholics. The consecrated host is not just wafer made from wheat flour consisting of carbohydrates amounting to two calories. The moment the host is consecrated, it becomes the body of Jesus Christ in substance and essence. That is dogma. Believe or not believe.

It is the embodiment of their faith, the sacrament Christ himself instituted at the Last Supper. The Eucharist is not a mere symbol, like the national flag is. But even flags are supposed to be handled a certain way. As Girl Scouts, we were taught how to raise, lower and fold the national flag. The flag must never touch the ground.

On another topic, as Pinoys are wont to say, I caught former President Ramos' national security adviser Jose Almonte on ANC being interviewed by David Celdran and Karmina Constantino, regarding the wire-tapped, damning conversation allegedly between Ms Arroyo and Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. I thought Almonte explained it plainly: military intelligence gathering is supposed to be used for national security and not for personal or partisan gain. The President may not use it for her own self-interest. Her opponents may not use it for that purpose either.

But as they say, and this applies to those who figure prominently in the unfolding political drama, it's okay to steal, to bribe and be bribed, to cheat, to lie, to do something illegal as long as you don't get caught in the act. You could always play victim or victor later.

It's a toxic season.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Plebiscitary democracy

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

AN AMERICAN writer once groused that the problem with the Philippine version of democracy was its plebiscitary nature: that is, presidents tend to address political questions by submitting them into referenda. Advocates of the parliamentary system might take heart in this observation since, after all, what is a "snap election" but a plebiscite (at least, in the sense of the elections called by Marcos in 1986 and proposed by Estrada in 2001)?

Indeed, plebiscitary democracy is arguably the more mainstream approach to political leadership, and not just in purely parliamentary systems.

Anglo-Saxons are skeptical of plebiscitary democracy because they view it as pandering to the mob, when the fundamental purpose of representative democracy in the British and American tradition is to place the governing power in the hands of a sober ruling class; or, as Sergio Osmeña III put it, a "directing class." It was in defense of this idea that he fought Quezon (in 1922), who preferred a government of "issue-by-issue referendum."

Indeed, the idea of plebiscitary democracy is fundamentally Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the French political philosopher, who felt the distrust of the many should be replaced with a healthy confidence in the wisdom of the majority view.

In other words: the Anglo-Saxon conservative view is to entrust government to the elected professionals; the radical French tradition is to throw major questions to the people for them to fight over and then decide.

And so it was that on April 28, 1969, President Charles de Gaulle of France resigned after his proposal to strip the French Senate of much of its power was rejected in a referendum. His example is particularly interesting because of the strong interest our political class has shown in the French model (a president with real powers, but a parliamentary legislature).

Indeed, our political class has been fundamentally divided along these two lines since 1922, at least—even if today's politicians no longer have the depth of learning and cosmopolitan education the generation raised under Spain possessed.

The political class reared in the 19th century looked to France for its radical notions, and to Britain and America for its conservative ideals. Anyone surveying the Malolos Constitution will see at once a fundamental distrust of broad executive power—a tendency institutionalized, ironically, by Quezon who used the Senate as a battering ram against the Executive that was then headed by an American governor-general (as chief executive, Quezon bewailed this reality); Osmeña, on the other hand, never fully trusted the notion of plebiscitary democracy, as he was not, by nature, a demagogue.

Our mainstream politics has been a history of national divisions and of plebiscites. The first was the question of a secret society's romantic notions of liberty, with its radical notions of meritocracy versus the desire to impose order under the authority of a professional class composed of the home-grown aristocracy: Bonifacio's Magdiwang versus Aguinaldo's Magdalo. The second was the question of permanent political union with America as espoused by the Federalistas, and political autonomy as espoused by the Nacionalistas, in the elections of 1907.

Then there was the question of a purely representative government, as espoused by Osmeña, or a government by public opinion, as championed by Quezon, in 1922; and the question of loyal collaboration with Leonard Wood or legislative opposition to him, in that same year. There was the question of settling for an independence law as the best that could be achieved, or risking something marginally better, in 1933. There would be divisions over the giving of parity rights to the Americans in 1946; on the question of sticking to the old guard under Quirino or embracing a new generation under Magsaysay, in 1953; in the political contest cunningly turned into a referendum on collaboration with the Japanese by Ferdinand Marcos against Sergio Osmeña Jr. in 1969; and then the series of sham referenda under martial law, culminating in the biggest referendum of all, the snap election of 1986. In the last, desperate hours of his presidency, President Estrada turned to the Marcos model of a snap election for a dignified exit.

There, too, is the nature of the mid-term election as a referendum on the incumbent. Since the birth of the modern presidency in 1935, the mid-term election decides whether the president would be turned into a lame duck or not. I've mentioned this before, and it bears mentioning again: even without the present controversies hounding the administration, it will face judgment at the polls in 2007.

Today's political discussions only prove where American influence on our political culture ends, and its residual confidence in French revolutionary idealism begins. Take this extract from an American scholar, Claes Ryn:

"Descendants of the Rousseauistic spirit in the large societies of today usually recognize the need for elected representatives who can act for the people, but they also believe that precautions must be taken to ensure that those representatives will faithfully carry out the wishes of their constituencies. Anything less is a betrayal of popular sovereignty. Among the ways of guaranteeing adherence to the current popular will are short terms of office for elected representatives, the possibility of recalling or censuring public officials, and referenda on issues of public policy."

So, I say: those confident that the public can best decide the question of a president's continued fitness for office reflect the authentic, innate idealism of our revolutionary past, and represent the authentic traditions of our mainstream political past.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

Surrogate mom

YOUNG BLOOD

Beverly S. Figarola

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I'M fond of kids. I love being with them, and taking care of them. But unfortunately, I'm the youngest in our family. So I ended up looking after my younger cousins instead.

I was about 6 years old when I took my "first child" under my wing. David was 3 at the time, and my mom used to bring him to our house almost every day, as his parents were busy running their business, just like my own parents. I would feed, bathe and dress him. And as part of our daily routine, after lunch, I would tell him stories about this and that while he would interrupt so often to ask questions.

When I ran out of stories, most of which I just made up, we would take a nap. I would cuddle him like a teddy bear, the way mom used to cuddle me.

My "second baby" was Jenny. She was a year younger than David. Almost without let-up, we would play one kiddie game after another: hide and seek, cooking, vendor-buyer, making rag dolls and what have you. One of the hardest games I played with them was "horsey-horsey," since I was always the the "crawling horse."

I remember, too, climbing the guava tree in our backyard. The yellow and big fruits were theirs, while I had to make do with the green and smaller ones. I was still a kid then, and climbing wasn't easy for me.

These two kids became very close to me. Each time Jenny's mother would come to fetch her, she would cry and cling to me with all her might. No amount of persuasion could make her go home.

Then came summer and suddenly there were five of them, all first cousins of mine. The more, the merrier, I thought.

But it wasn't all sugar and spice and everything nice. When one of the kids got hurt, my elders would give me a tongue-lashing. Sometimes, too, I served as their knight in shining armor, whenever the big kids picked on them. But knights had their own waterloo, especially if that knight was a girl aged 6.

When I entered grade school, the five kids would still go to our house on weekends. And again we would play to our hearts' content. I learned to love the children so much that I even sacrificed my homework during the day, and sacrificed also my favorite TV shows for cartoons until I learned to love them, too.

That was not all the sacrificed I had to make. I missed playing with children my own age. I was in a bind. I was in between two opposing worlds which I couldn't have at the same time. But I chose to be with them because I loved them so. My memories of the times I spent with them are too numerous and too long to write down. Suffice it to say that during those early days of our childhood, I was their surrogate mother.

When they eventually went to school, our meetings became less frequent. Nevertheless, we were still able to bond. But as they matured, their interests gradually changed. Worse, they preferred to spend their spare time with their newfound friends rather than with me.

When I went to college, I seldom saw them anymore. We went our separate ways. We would only meet during family gatherings. On one of these rare times, I don't know what drove me to ask them about the times and the things we used to do when we were kids. I was disheartened when they said they hardly remembered any of it! My compassionate heart was crushed. But I have managed to put on a façade of understanding and kept the hurt to myself. Pray tell, what good are memories if they are confined in our minds and not shared with others? Where's the joy in recalling them?

Now, another batch of kids are staring at me, waiting and wanting to be picked up, loved and caressed. Why should I take them when I can already read the writing on the wall, when at the end of the day, I would end up the loser again? Once burned, twice shy.

I was sulking until the day Dad and I dined out. During our conversation, he asked me if I still remembered the times when he would take me to the plaza to play. Caught by surprise, I softly said, "No." He asked me if I could still remember a particular lullaby that he used to sing to me. Again, I shook my head. I couldn't for the life of me remember because a lot of time and experiences had passed since then. He asked me if I could still remember the times when he would read me Aesop's fables and recite Mother Goose rhymes or the days when we would wander in the meadow (the place is now populated) and pick some wild flowers. There were more, but some only registered in my mind like hazy photographs.

Dad must be as disappointed as I was with my cousins, I thought. But when I looked at him, he was as calm as the clouds on a summer day. No trace of bitterness was on his face.

"Dad, don't you find it unfair that I have practically forgotten all those things?" I asked.

"No, my child," he said, looking amused. "It's perfectly understandable for small kids to forget the distant past when they grow up. At their tender age, their brain is still small, and that explains why their memory is short. They remember only the recent ones. Besides, it's the obligation of every parent to look after his children's needs, welfare and happiness. That should precede the parent's own personal needs or emotions. And, on top of this, parents should love their children unconditionally, without counting the cost."

My father's words put me back to my senses. I felt my bitterness fade away. Why did I let my emotions take the better part of me? It was foolish of me to take umbrage at something beyond my cousins' control. I should be happy instead of hurt to watch them march to another stage of their lives, knowing well that I was in a way instrumental in molding them into what they are now. I should be happy instead of sulking, knowing that once in their early lives, I was their playmate, their tutor, their knight in shining armor, and most importantly, their loving and caring surrogate mother, even if those good old days have now vanished in their memory.

Beverly S. Figarola, 20, is an AB Communication Arts graduate of the College of the Holy Spirit, Manila.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

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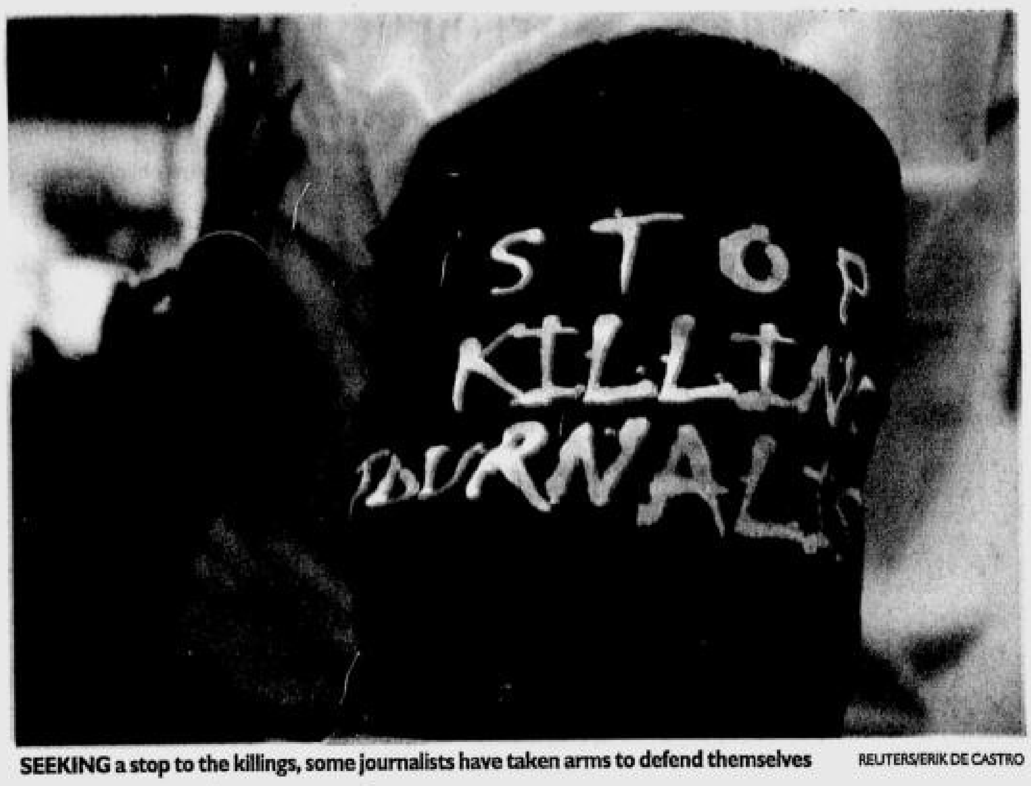

SEEKING a stop to the killings, some journalists have taken arms to defend themselves REUTERS/ERIK DE CASTRO

All of us, not just media, are bound to tell the truth

MEDIA killings, poverty, corruption and a host of other problems may just be the tip of the iceberg. Will the arrest of some media killers solve and stop the murder of media practitioners? How about the problem of "fall guys, scapegoats and sacrificial lambs"? How about the deeper problem of "masterminds, drug lords, *jueteng* lords, big tax evaders and their protectors in high offices, all the way up to Malacañang and the Supreme Court?

Treating symptoms and ignoring the root cause have been the way of reactionary institutions. Reactionary institutions protect an elaborate system that props up structures of inequality, injustice and exploitation. Many years ago, we spoke of unjust and sinful structures in society. These days we seem to veer away from anything deep: deep thinking, deep seeing, deep analysis and, surely, deep action.

Superficiality is an instrument of the status quo and characterizes elite thinking. Why are journalists killed? Superficial thinking passes the buck to others, blaming them for something that the blamers are equally responsible for.

Yes, there may be abusive media practitioners, but this does not justify the killing of media people. What if a journalist is murdered for telling the truth? What if a journalist gets sued for libel because she or he told the truth?

Mercenary media are not the real the problem here. Dirty politics and dirty business are; they are the mother of mercenary media; and they cannot tolerate genuine media, which tell the truth as faithfully and courageously as possible no matter the danger.

Sinful, unjust, exploitative structures and systems are hideous monsters afraid of the truth. Genuine media provide both facts and diagnoses, which become the bases for appropriate intervention. Good government seeks good media. Bad government seeks bad media.

But more than professional media, we need a morally upright media ready to proclaim the truth at all times. The death of the 68 journalists should not be trivialized. Instant summits, token funds, facetious commentaries trivialize the sacrifice of those who have been killed for telling the truth.

No, not only media have the duty to tell the truth. All of us, especially those in a position to be heard, should proclaim the truth from the rooftops at the top of our voices. Together we demand, "Stop media violence. Stop the abuse of the libel law. Protect and support whistle-blowers of bad governance and corruption. And promote genuine press freedom!"

—FR. ROBERTO P. REYES,
Gomburza,
Camerino cor. Legaspi Sts.,
Project 4, Quezon City

An inspiring answer in the face of poverty

THIS is in response to the INQUIRER editorial "Help with dignity." (PDI, 6/9/05)

It is inspiring to read real-life stories like the one about the Jesuit priests who have been helping underprivileged students of Ateneo, especially in a time when we are faced again with another crisis.

I totally agree that the Daily Bread Program can provide a model to promote dignity and inspire hope especially among those who aspire to acquire quality education from an established institution like Ateneo. The program is a working model for education and should be replicated nationwide.

But while noble and inspiring, the program is largely unknown and unfelt in a nation suffering from a massive breakdown of confidence and values; thus it is a nation that has become insecure, unstable, cynical, hopeless and desperate.

How can we inspire hope in the present situation? How can we salvage our dignity (or whatever is left of it) as a nation?

The only way now, perhaps, would be to show that things can improve, through people (like the two Jesuit priests) and programs that are visible and beautiful and, most importantly, programs that inspire heroism and nobility in every Filipino, rich and poor alike.

Through this model, our national leaders, both public and private, can restore the core Filipino value of *bayanihan* to motivate a distressed population to strive for a brighter future.

Through this model, the government can begin mobilizing its resources and embark on a program with a simple development formula for providing land for the landless, home for the homeless, food for the hungry, water for the thirsty and light for those in darkness.

And perhaps, this model can answer the question: In the face of grinding poverty and increasing hopelessness in our country, what can we do?

—JONES DIZON,
jones_dizon2@yahoo.com

Turning to Jesus in times of crisis

ONCE more we find ourselves in the midst of a crisis. What is most detestable about these events is that they come either because of the thoughtlessness and recklessness of those in power or because of the machinations of people who want power for themselves, leaving the already impoverished Filipino the victim. Jesus is God's Word of Salvation. It is then to Him and to his Gospel that we turn to find guidance through these troubled times.

It is distressing and disgusting that we have lost faith in ourselves and in our institutions. The most frequent contention of those hell-bent on mayhem is that our institutions are not to be trusted. We ask them: Can we trust you who claim to be distrustful of our legal institutions?

Yet, congressional investigations of late have achieved nothing except media mileage, simply because Congress has no power to prosecute. Those who wish to punish the guilty must prosecute them immediately—not before the alluring glare of camera lights and gullible audiences, but in the sedate processes of criminal justice.

Former NBI director Samuel Ong's posturing is itself curious. While he claims to be a witness to wrongdoing, it is apparent that he also has a political agenda—he asked for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation and for the comfort and solace of her political foes.

The Lord laid down the standard by which we shall be judged at the end of time. Did we recognize him in the least among us? The ultimate criterion therefore of the righteousness or the malice of whistle-blowers and administration alike is whether or not their acts and motives are born out of genuine love, concern, regard and care for the poor and the least privileged.

Truth is likewise a value at stake: truth on the part of whistle-blowers and witnesses; truth on the part of the administration. There is nothing more distressing than to witness the sad fact that we are becoming a nation of liars, and greatness can never rise from the fetid pool of lies and duplicity. We therefore ask the administration to be truthful—not only in regard to the actuations of Mikey and Mike, but also, and probably more importantly, about the discharge by officials of government of their constitutional and statutory duties. We also demand truth from the accusers and their witnesses, for there is nothing easier in the world than to smear reputation and assault honor by a barrage of conjectures and hearsay!

We are humbled by our own folly—ours and that of our leaders. And more than ever, our troubled days remind us that though in daily life we are votaries of the world and its allurements, we will find strength to weather this storm humbly on our knees, before the God who creates pathways for his people even through tempestuous seas!

—FR. RANHILIO C. AQUINO, Ph.D.,
head, Academic Affairs Office,
Philippine Judicial Academy,
Supreme Court, Manila

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Sweeping, unfair statement vs NGOs

THIS refers to Ramon Tulfo's column, "Women cause-oriented groups a letdown." (PDI, 6/7/05) We find Tulfo's statement to be sweeping and very unfair, not only to us in Gabriela but also to other women advocacy groups.

In our 21 years of helping women victims of violence, we have always treated our colleagues and the women survivors with respect.

We want to clarify things regarding Katti Colet's case. Last year, we received an e-mail from her asking for our assistance. We learned that she was already sheltered at the DSWD's The Haven. Even so, we still tried to contact her. Our psychologist, Jovita Montes, was able to talk to a Haven personnel who was surprised that Katti was able to communicate with us. As standard operating procedure in shelters for battered women, the survivors are not given leeway or privilege to communicate with people outside the shelter, for their own protection. We weren't able to talk to her and get the summary of her case after this clarification from the shelter.

April this year, we received a call from Katti. We learned that she was already out of the shelter and that Tulfo was helping her. Our psychologist talked to her over the phone, and the two of them agreed to meet somewhere. But the meeting did not materialize because Katti had security problems. They again scheduled another meeting, but Katti had no money for fare. That was the last time we heard from her. We did not receive another call from her. On our part, we have no way of communicating with her, as she did not give us any contact number. It is only now, after our organization was mentioned in Tulfo's column, that we learned of her whereabouts.

Sincerity in our work especially for women victims of violence has been our way of working to advocate women's rights and welfare. Here at the national office of Gabriela, we receive an average of 40 cases per month through the victims' personal visits or calls. To say that *"magaling lang ang Gabriela sa* press release" is indeed an insult to our 21-year record and integrity. We always exert our best efforts in helping our clients and, if requested by them, we handle the cases with utmost confidentiality.

We appreciate that Tulfo shares our concern for helping women victims. At this point, it would be best if we can coordinate our efforts in helping Katti Colet. Thank you very much.

—EMMI DE JESUS,
secretary general,
Gabriela, 35 Scout Delgado St.,
Barangay Laging Handa, QC

Suspect journalism

WE take strong exception to the columns of Vic Agustin (PDI, 6/3/05) and Conrado Banal III (PDI, 6/7/05) wherein they accused us of certain acts inconsistent with our duties and responsibilities as independent directors of Equitable PCI Bank. The allegations are totally baseless, irresponsible and manipulative.

Agustin's June 3 column reported and commented on a letter that does not exist and was never received by the EPCI board of directors. The board received on June 1, 2005 a letter from three board directors, but it nowhere contains any of the absurd allegations Agustin cited. It concerned mainly certain matters to be taken up at the next board meeting.

In turn, Banal's June 7 column accused EPCIB president Rene Buenaventura and the three of us "for voting—without fail and also without shame for the benefit of the Go family." The piece is a litany of falsehoods and half-truths; its abusive language even refers to some of us as "attack dogs," calling to question our long record of service in government. Yet, Banal's only basis for these attacks on our reputations are the fevered allegations of an "SSS representative to *[sic]* the board." He did not even have the courtesy to ask if any of us had any response to these accusations.

First, the bank has three independent directors, not four. Buenaventura is not an independent director; he sits on the board by virtue of his position as president and CEO.

Second, whenever we vote in the board, we do not vote for the benefit of a family; we do so in light of what we judge to be good for the bank and all its shareholders. As the minutes of all board meetings will bear out, we have never taken any actions that may be construed as inimical to the bank or as abdication of our duties as independent directors.

Third, our period of service as independent directors has coincided with the bank's banner performance in financial results and strategic reorganization. Net profits grew by 55 percent over the past year. EPCIB is the best performing bank stock in the local stock market. And it paid out P400 million in dividends this year. This, in our view, is also our service to the legions of Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System members.

Evidently, the two columnists misunderstand the duties and responsibilities of an independent director in a private corporation.

The concerted attacks leveled at us and at bank management totally bewilder us. We can only interpret them as part of a bigger effort to wrest control of the bank from the present leadership and to shackle our voices on the issue. If this is indeed the object of this exercise, we do not understand why Agustin and Banal have assigned themselves frontal roles in the assault. Or why the Inquirer would tolerate the use of its pages for such suspect journalism.

—ANTONIO I. BASILIO,
CESAR B. BAUTISTA,
ROBERTO R. ROMULO,
Equitable PCI Bank,
Makati Avenue corner
HV dela Costa St., Makati City

'Converted' motor vehicles undergo extensive testing

THIS is in reaction to the article "Over 2 'road terrorists' spotted every minute," written by Tessa Salazar, which appeared in the INQUIRER's Motoring section last May 4.

It may be true that there are trucks and vehicles traveling in the highways of Metro Manila, which may be considered not roadworthy. The writer, however, missed some essential points in her article.

For instance, the truck shown in the picture has an old plate number. If you would verify with the Land Transportation Office, this truck might have been registered in the early '80s. Back then, the technology of converting trucks and vehicles from right-hand-drive (RHD) to left-hand-drive (LHD) was not as good as it is now. Today, the process of converting a vehicle from RHD to LHD complies with the "repositioning standards."

Before they are registered with the LTO, the converted vehicles undergo extensive testing for roadworthiness by accredited vehicle testing centers. In Subic Freeport, there are two vehicle-testing centers accredited by the LTO and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

In addition, all motor vehicles have limited life span. A truck which has been used for more than 20 years would surely have broken or missing parts. Missing wipers and broken headlights may be attributed to normal wear and tear, not to improper conversion.

So why then do we still have vehicles traveling in the highways of Metro Manila, which are not roadworthy? Maybe, we should ask the LTO, the government agency responsible for registering motor vehicles and accrediting vehicle-testing centers.

Since motor vehicle licenses must be renewed annually, the LTO, before approving renewal applications, should require the vehicle owners to comply with existing laws and standards. If the owners do not renew their vehicle licenses, then law enforcers should impound the vehicles for public safety.

—NEAL PEREZ,
operations manager,
Subic Bay Motors Corp.,
Bldg. 1457, Argonaut Highway,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone

'You've got mail'

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

WHENEVER I write about reform in the institutional Church, I get two kinds of reactions: those "for" and those "against." "Dear Pope, surprise us" (PDI, 6/21/05) drew a third kind: those who seemed to waver between "for" and "against."

As usual those "against" were unequivocal in their objection. One would settle for no less than first sources, for "actual Church documents" to prove that "the Church really back track(ed) on its positions." "What is your document to prove this?" Were the "Noli" and "Fili" ever in the official "Index of Forbidden Books"? When were they put in and when removed? I was trapped before Shylock with his pound of flesh, not one ounce more, not one ounce less. He called my attention to Tradition with a capital T (part of Divine Revelation and therefore untouchable) and tradition with a small t (long-standing practices that can be changed or removed). Aware *naman ako* of that distinction. The drift precisely of my column was how many Catholics treat traditions like Tradition, investing the former with the weight of "absolute truths."

Another dismissed me as "so seventies and so passé!" The "concerns of young Catholics" were not those which I named. And I thought that reproductive issues, marriage or non-celibacy were the youth's concerns. We who are in our 70s are far too menopausal for all that! And too old to be ordained. The writer said he would pray for me.

Those "against" echoed each other: "The changes you enumerate will not happen" .... there will be no change in the Catholic Church .... The successor of Peter the Rock will make sure of that."

Those "for" congratulated me and asked me to "keep up the good work," thanking me as others have done in past columns for talking "out of the box" and "expressing" what they wanted to say but could not for one reason or another. One hoped for the "disrobement process" of our overdressed hierarchy, amused at "how funny" our "princes" look. "Don't they feel alluded to by Jesus' words about tassels and philacteries?"

One who seemed ambivalent mused: "Some want what you want... some are waiting... many do not want any changes at all."

Another seemed to seek more answers: "Did Christ tell Peter . . . to make sure the Church kept with the ever-changing times in order to be one with the people and relate with what the people wanted? .... But did Christ say to his disciples to change anything that He did by way of oral instructions and actions and examples?"

Another said, "How I wish to write you freely as what *(sic)* comes to my mind... but it's hard without any reservation. ... you find holes ... missing things ... Your family is not anymore as you think *(sic)* . . . it should be changed .... Try to put yourself in the shoes of the Church!"

What can these reactions be saying about the pulse of the faithful?

First, there is a tight, doctrinaire bloc that will preserve the Church as it is, at any cost, at any moment. They will rise like crusading "Defenders of the Faith," like Quick Reaction Teams on-the-ready with a near-fundamentalist spirit and arguments that can demolish the faint of heart.

Second, there is a less spirited but big sector that unwittingly strengthens the status quo desired by the first sector. Religion can be one of the most comfortable of comfort zones and swaths of the faithful abide in them—content to take the word of ecclesiastical authority on everything, no questions asked, no dissenting opinions advanced as these may be "temptations against faith"; content with male-conducted ceremonies and for whom a woman behind the altar is just too much. Sacred cows are not talked about, much less examined or criticized. "Cover with the mantel of charity the shortfalls you see," a letter writer advised. Or look the other way as when we looked down or closed our eyes when a kissing scene flashed on screen. What do you mean; this is what I've been taught and believed in for 20, 30, 50 years and now you tell me, *hindi pala ganun*? No unsettling please. "Do not disturb."

Third, the live-and-let-live liberals, bent mainly to "open eyes" and journey "towards adult faith" are scattered individuals or groups, less bent to "convert" as to see changes in the Church. Let no one say they love the Church less.

Last March, I threw a question, "Theology Study Club, anyone?" Three expressed interest. Has anybody gotten around to it? I look forward to the day when discussions "on religious and theological issues—verbally absent in this country" according to Jaime Licauco, will be as common as Book or Bible Study groups; the day when lay persons can engage in such discussions without inviting friendly but nervous remarks like, *"Magagalit sa inyo ang Arsobispo"* or *"May permiso ba kayo?"* or "Beware the Inquisition." By the way, how are Theology classes in Catholic colleges and universities today and in seminaries, too? Oh, to be a student again.

Asuncion David Maramba is a retired professor, book editor and occasional journalist. Comments to marda@info.com.ph; fax 8210659

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Boracay resorts OK ecology plans

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY have agreed to disagree on land titling, but they could not agree more on environmental protection.

Resort owners in Boracay have crafted individual seven-year environmental management plans to save the world-renowned island from deterioration caused by unbridled development.

At least 39 members of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI) have submitted their management plans to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources detailing individual plans for water utilization, management of solid and toxic waste and sewerage connection.

The individual plans were in compliance with the environmental consent agreement between the BFI and DENR signed early this year, a first between the DENR and the tourism industry.

"We may be at odds when it comes to the issue of land titling but when it comes to protecting the environment, we are one," DENR special action officer for Boracay Zoilo Andin told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"This is the first time in history that resort owners themselves crafted an association plan and then required its members to submit individual plans," he said, hailing the BFI's initiative.

Andin said the plans would define the parameters by which the resorts can comply with environmental laws and protect the environment in which they do business.

The plans were turned over to Andin, Assistant Secretary for Environment Casimiro Ynares Jr., and regional officials in a cordial ceremony following a heated three-hour debate over land titling in Boracay Saturday.

The individual plans were patterned after the master development plan for Boracay approved by the DENR in February, BFI chair Orlando Sacay said.

He said the BFI's participation in the Philippine Environmental Partnership Program showed that resort owners were serious about addressing critical environmental issues from 2005 to 2012.

"It's based on the principle of self-regulation. What more can you ask for from the resort owners?" Sacay said, stressing that the property holders in Boracay were equally concerned with the preservation of the island's beauty.

Tourism has sustained Boracay for the past decade, with tourist arrivals to the Philippines increasing despite travel advisories posted by developed countries against the country.

Some 2.3 million tourists were recorded last year, the highest achieved by the Philippines so far.

A FOREIGN tourist basks in the beauty of Boracay's beaches. ERNIE SARMIENTO

3 suspects in murder of Esperat fear for lives, seek jail transfer

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Three of the four suspects in the murder of journalist Marlene Esperat had asked for transfer to another detention cell.

Jerry Cabayag, the alleged gunman, as well as Randy Grecia and Estanislao Bismanos, who served as lookouts during the March 25 murder of Esperat, cited threats to their lives as reason they want the transfer. They claimed that they were no longer safe as they noticed suspicious persons coming to their current detention cell.

They feared the mastermind in the Esperat killing might have hired somebody to kill them.

Cabayag, Grecia and Bismanos are under the custody of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Central Mindanao. But they were detained at a police precinct here as the CIDG detention cell is already crowded.

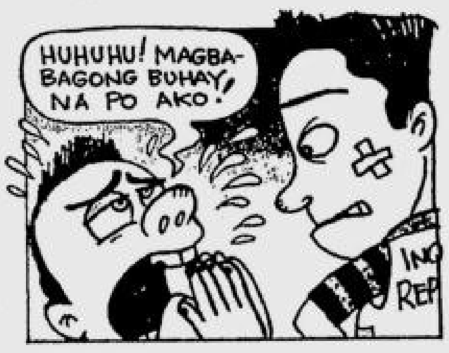
The CIDG had already filed a motion asking the Department of Justice to allow the transfer of the three accused to the General Santos City Jail. The DOJ has yet to act on the request.

The three accused told reporters that they wanted to plead guilty during the May 9 arraignment of the Esperat murder case in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, but were advised by their lawyer not to.

The other accused, Rowie Barua, is already under the custody of the DOJ, which is planning to use him as state witness.

Barua, formerly an active member of Isafp assigned at the Army's 6th Infantry Division based in Maguindanao, tagged two high-ranking officials of the Department of Agriculture as alleged masterminds in the Esperat killing. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Coast Guard punishes corporal who hit Inquirer correspondent



HUHUHU! MAGBA-BAGONG BUHAY, NA PO AKO!
ING REP

CEBU CITY—The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has penalized a corporal for assaulting Jhunnex Napallacan, news director of dyLA and correspondent of the INQUIRER, on Saturday night.

Commander Henry Caballero, deputy chief of Coast Guard District Central-Eastern Visayas, said a penalty of "hard labor" and indefinite restriction was imposed on Cpl. Allan Espinosa, 36, and a native of Palawan.

He said Espinosa would be ordered to work for two more hours after the regular work period.

He added Espinosa was indefinitely barred from taking any alcoholic drink and from leaving his vessel to where he was assigned.

Espinosa is currently detailed at the BRP Pampanga, which was docked at the vicinity of the Malacañang sa Sugbo.

Napallacan was satisfied with the penalty imposed by the PCG on its personnel and had dropped plans to file criminal charges.

"Since administrative sanctions were imposed, we are satisfied with the action. However, if he commits a similar mistake in the future, we would be the first to file a complaint against him," he said.

At about 8:30 p.m. on June 11, Napallacan went to a store near Waterfront Police Station in Pier 1 to buy a prepaid card. He was talking with the store owner when Espinosa suddenly came up to him and punched him near the left ear.

The corporal was drinking with a companion at the store before he hit Napallacan without provocation. The incident happened a few meters away from radio station dyLA.

Napallacan suffered a one-cm cut on his left ear and bruises. Stinus Maritt Remonde, dyLA station manager, informed Presidential Assistant for the Visayas Felix Ganzon, who holds office at the Malacañang sa Sugbo, of the incident. Remonde is the wife of Secretary Cerge Remonde, government media group head. Ganzon then called the attention of the PCG officials who immediately conducted an investigation.

A remorseful Espinosa met Napallacan on Tuesday afternoon at the PCG office in Pier 3. He repeatedly apologized to Napallacan, saying he did not mean to hit him. Napallacan accepted Espinosa's apology. "I have forgiven him," he said. *Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Historic locomotive finds new home

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—One of the country's first locomotives will find a new home in this city.

Mayor Benjamin Lim said the very first locomotive in the country that traveled from Manila to Dagupan in 1892 will be donated by the Philippine National Railways to the Dagupan City government.

Three vintage trains are kept at the PNR yard in Tutuban, Manila, and one of these was marked "Dagupan" as its destination, Lim said.

The train, which will be turned over to the city government on June 20, will be temporarily stationed at the city plaza.

Lim said the city government is considering the old PNR station here as the permanent site of the train.

Felipe Siapno, a member of the PNR board of directors, said it had always been his dream to bring home to Dagupan one of the vintage trains.

He said he was happy that his dream would now become a reality.

Dagupan was among the first major routes of the Philippine railway system in the late 1800s.

The railway system also played a major role in Philippine history and in the personal life of the national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal.

Leonor Rivera, Rizal's long-time sweetheart, stayed in Dagupan and it was in the city where she met Henry Kipping, a British engineer.

Rizal lost Rivera to Kipping, the British engineer who supervised the construction of the railroad from Manila to Dagupan.

Thinking Rizal had forgotten her, Rivera consented to marry Kipping, her mother's choice to be her husband.

But Rizal had not forgotten Rivera, his sweetheart for 11 years. He kept on writing Rivera but her mother kept the love letters and Rivera never got to read them.

Rivera's mother disapproved of Rizal because of his being involved in moves to reform the Spanish colonial government.

Records of the Lingayen-Dagupan archdiocese showed that Rivera married Kipping (whose name in the book of marriage or Libro de Casamientos appeared as Don Carlos Enrique Kipping) on June 17, 1891.

At that time, Rizal was in Belgium doing the final editing of his novel El Filibusterismo.

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REPLY TO GMA OUSTER MOVES

Singsons warn of 'Ilocos Republic'

CANDON CITY—Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson said an "Ilocos Republic" would emerge if President Macapagal-Arroyo were removed from office without due process.

"We will come out with an Ilocos autonomous region to protect our own constituents," Singson, a staunch supporter of Ms Arroyo, said in Ilocano on Wednesday during the inauguration of the City of Candon General Hospital here.

"The President should not be taken out without any due process. We don't want a change of government. The sentiment of the whole country is different from the sentiment of Metro Manila," he said.

Singson's testimony during the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada, his erstwhile friend, helped bring down Estrada and thrust Ms Arroyo to power in 2001.

Singson said majority of representatives and governors in the four provinces in the Ilocos are open to moves pushing for federalism in the country.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson said the "Ilocos Republic" is not a mere response to the move to oust Ms Arroyo.

"It's not only a show of support. If there is no more rule of law, we would be forced to establish an autonomous region to implement our own peace and order as well as manage our economy," he said.

Governor Singson said the proposed "Ilocos Republic" would include the provinces composing the Ilocos (Region I)—Pangasinan, La Union, Ilocos Sur and Ilocos Norte.

He said the Cordillera provinces of Abra and Mt. Province, which used to be parts of the Ilocos region, would be included in the set up.

He said under the proposal, the present leaders would rule the "republic" on their own terms although Rep. Singson said they would eventually select a common leader.

He said that they would propose the holding of a plebiscite if the experiment pushed through.

The 1987 Constitution mandates the creation of only two autonomous regions—the Cordillera and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The law creating the Cordillera Autonomous Region lost in two plebiscites in the 1990s.

Ilocos region has a population of more than four million in 2000. *Frank Cimatu and Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

R&R

Elders of Kadaclan, Mountain Province rest and chat under the shade of their local church. MITCH MAURICIO

S. Tagalog workers join move vs GMA

CANDELARIA, Quezon—Militant workers in Southern Tagalog are no longer just pushing for the passage of a P125-legislated wage hike. They are now also calling for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Some 500 workers from the Partido ng Manggagawa-Quezon Chapter staged a noise barrage and protest rally in Plaza Narra here yesterday afternoon, declaring President Arroyo an "enemy of the working class."

Teody Lat, president of Peter Paul Workers Union, said they were supposed to only hold mass actions to push for a legislated wage hike after the regional wage board granted them a measly P22-wage increase.

"But more pressing events took place. The country's workers also now join the Filipino people in calling for the President to step down," Lat said.

Transition

Ronnie Luna, chair of the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino-Calabarzon, said similar noise barrage and protest marches were also held in Calamba City, Santa Rosa City and Canlubang in Laguna; and Pala-pala in Dasmariñas and Bacoor, Cavite.

Luna said the labor movement would be advancing the position of setting up a "transitional revolutionary government" to replace the dying regime of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Civilian in character, the main task of this transitional revolutionary government is to institute major political and economic reforms while ensuring the immediate transition toward a constitutional order for a new democratic government," Luna said in a mobile phone interview.

He said workers' protest actions in Southern Tagalog were in coordination with yesterday's nationwide mass mobilization organized by the movement Lumalabang Mamamayan sa Kahirapan at Krisis or Lumaban Ka! *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Sale of ECCs surfaces as DENR exec sued for extort

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Reports on the alleged rampant sale of environmental clearance certificates (ECC) surfaced here after graft charges were filed against the provincial environment officer of Pampanga who allegedly took P50,000 for the release of such permits.

Businessman Benjamin Canlas said Elizardo Alberto, chief of the provincial environment and natural resources office (Penro), approached him five years ago and asked for P150,000 to help him secure an ECC for the operations of his meat processing company in Angeles City.

In his affidavit submitted to the office of the Ombudsman, Canlas said Alberto pressed him to immediately give P50,000, which he paid in check. The Penro chief supposedly planned to collect the balance later.

Alberto, also the chief of the provincial mining board, denied the allegation. He declined further comments, saying he has yet to receive a copy of the complaint.

However, the INQUIRER obtained a copy of a May 19 order issued by Director Joaquin Salazar of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon. Salazar ordered Alberto to submit a reply in 10 days.

Connections

According to two sources at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Alberto was allegedly boasting of his closeness with Sen. Manuel Lapid.

Benalfre Galang, Lapid's chief of staff, denied that Lapid was intervening in the case of Alberto.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor earlier suspended the Penro chief.

Between 2000 and 2005, Canlas said Alberto referred him to four people connected with the Environmental Management Bureau.

Despite more payments and followup, Canlas said neither Alberto nor the EMB personnel had facilitated the release of his permits.

Canlas said because of the long period of waiting, he decided to go straight to EMB Central Luzon Director Lormelyn Claudio, whose name was also flaunted by Alberto's group.

"Director Claudio, upon reviewing the records, told me that no application was filed in the DENR office under my name," Canlas said.

Denials

Claudio told Defensor in a memorandum that her two staff members, Vicente de la Cruz and Aimee de Jesus, did not receive any money from Canlas and, in fact, advised him to follow the procedures and submit documents before his ECC application was accepted.

Claudio said one Rico Mercado, who allegedly received P10,000 from Canlas, is not an EMB employee.

She said Benedicto Yacat, an EMB consultant, admitted having seen Canlas hand a check to Alberto.

Yacat said he did not prepare the ECC documents since Alberto "did not pay him as they agreed earlier." Claudio said DENR and EMB employees are prohibited from preparing ECC documents, recommending consultants or scouting for clients.

"Such unacceptable and prohibited practice continues to be the subject of complaint from the business/private sector," she said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Bus firm probed for new accident in North

BAGUIO CITY—Another provincial bus firm is under investigation by the Department of Transportation and Communications following an accident on Naguilian Road on Saturday afternoon.

An Eso Nice bus bound for La Union lost its brakes, prompting the driver to steer the bus toward the mountain wall to slow down the vehicle as it sped down Naguilian, according to Reynaldo Rimando, one of the passengers.

Several of its 40 passengers, including Rimando, a mathematics professor of the University of the Philippines Baguio, suffered bruises when the bus ditched in a mountain wall in Burgos, La Union.

They were treated at the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in San Fernando City.

No reports

No blotter reports about the accident could be found in Baguio City or in Benguet, but Alfredo Mondiguing, DOTC Cordillera director, said he had ordered an investigation to determine whether outdated buses were being sneaked into the city using new franchises.

The DOTC has grounded the Pangasinan-based Byron Bus Co. after one of its buses crashed into a roadside boulder and turned turtle on Marcos Highway last month. The accident killed 29 passengers.

Mondiguing said the condition of the wrecked Byron bus confirmed reports that some bus companies had found a way to dodge a strict franchise moratorium governing provincial carriers based in Baguio.

Circuitous route

"We discovered that the Byron bus involved in the accident had been granted a franchise route [that covered] Philex Mines in Itogon and Tuba to Pangasinan or La Union. This is a way to go around a moratorium on franchises covering Baguio routes, which the local government asked for to help them manage traffic," he said.

"None of these new bus firms with routes to Philex ever go there. In fact, these buses still ply the Baguio to Dagupan City route but so far, they have not been caught cutting trips, which is a franchise violation, Mondiguing said. "It's also a good way to sneak in older bus models because few agencies will be able to compare records."

The accidents, however, have given the government proof about the loophole in franchise regulations, he said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

3 killed in blast

COTABATO CITY—At least three persons, including two children, were killed while another child was seriously wounded when the rifle grenade they were toying with went off in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao, police reports reaching here said on Tuesday. Killed in the Monday morning blast in Barangay Mita were Bro, 10; Lala, 12; and Nords, 28, all surnamed Saldona. It was not clear if the victims belonged to the same family. Sainudin Saldona, 8, the wounded victim, told police they found the explosive in a cornfield. He said Nords, who is mentally ill, hit the grenade with a stone. Sainudin said it was when the shell exploded. Police investigators said the grenade could be one of several dud explosives still littering Barangay Mita, which was site of fierce clashes between soldiers and Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels in 2003 and 2004. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gmelina logs seized

MATI, Davao Oriental—Newly installed provincial police chief Supt. Cesar Azares has made good his promise to go after illegal loggers here. On Monday night, Azares led his men in chasing after two trucks loaded with illegally cut logs. Mati police chief Senior Insp. Benedicto Faco said the two trucks were loaded with gmelina lumber from Caraga town. "Superintendent Azares seized the logs because the drivers could not present documents that would show the logs were legally cut," Faco said. A total of 199 pieces of gmelina lumber were loaded in the trucks. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

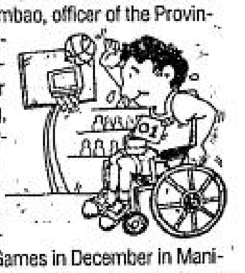
Ultimatum on robberies

MALAYBALAY CITY—Bukidnon Gov. Jose Maria Zubiri gave police authorities four days from Tuesday to solve the series of highway robberies in the province. Zubiri, who heads the Northern Mindanao peace and order council, issued the ultimatum after armed men struck anew and robbed passengers of a Rural Tours Bus in Sumilao town on Monday evening. Zubiri wanted the police to arrest the suspects, saying their continued freedom endangers passengers. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

4 top rebs yield

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—At least four ranking communist rebels surrendered in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, the military said Tuesday. Lt. Col. Francisco Pabayo, commander of the Army's 8th Infantry Battalion, said the rebels cited corruption among their leaders as one reason for their surrender. Maj. Alexis Bravo, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division, said the rebels also claimed they surrendered because they were having a hard time surviving in the jungles because of lack of food. On Monday, the rebels, led by Alberto Taquin alias Eskode of the Iking Balacuit Command, were formally received by the military during a simple ceremony here. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Games for PWDs



CITY OF CALAPAN—The regional games 2005 for persons with disabilities were held yesterday in Pinamalayan, Oriental Mindoro. Participants came from Mindoro island, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan, according to Teresita A. Umbao, officer of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development. Games included table tennis, wheelchair basketball, tenpin bowling, swimming, athletics, powerlifting, badminton, goal ball, chess, judo and soccer. Winners may join the 3rd Association of Southeast Asian Nations para-Games in December in Manila. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Loan for public market

OZAMIZ CITY—The city government has finalized a deal with the Land Bank of the Philippines for a P120-million loan intended for the rehabilitation of the dilapidated public market here. Vice Mayor Carlos Patricio Bernad said a fixed interest of 11 percent per year based on outstanding balance would be added to the loan, which would be repaid within 15 years. But Councilor Silveria Rupinta, of the minority block, said the local government might not be able to afford the annual debt servicing requirements. She said the city is highly dependent on its share of internal revenues collected by the national government. *Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Resign call 'arbitrary'

LUCBAN, Quezon—Akbayan partylist Rep. Loretta Anne Rosales described as arbitrary the demands for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign. "What's the basis for the call? If the issue is jueteng and the alleged connections of her relatives to it, we have to clarify that first. Let the proper and appropriate inquiry and investigation take place," Rosales said in an interview here. She added: "Whatever is the result, then that could probably be the basis for determining whether or not she should resign. We have to show it clear before the people that the democratic and constitutional processes have been followed." *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Reds ready to attack

LUCENA CITY—Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal called on the political opposition, nationalist and progressive forces and disgruntled police and military elements to unite and work together to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration. He said the Communist Party of the Philippines, New People's Army and the National Democratic Front are more than ready to lead the task of kicking the President out of Malacañang. "We will unleash all our 130 guerrilla fronts across the country and with the support of millions of Filipino masses from different revolutionary mass base, together we will hasten the downfall of the Arroyo regime," Rosal said in a phone interview. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SUKDULAN NAAAH!

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INQBOX

Question of the Week

What do you think should President Gloria Macapagal - Arroyo do in the wake of the jueteng and audio tape recording scandals?

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wiL each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! Ü*

Key in: inquirer box name/age/city/message.
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808
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inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 & their prizes will be mailed to them

Inquirer
menu

CA vice chair says general in rough seas

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, vice chair of the powerful Commission on Appointments, yesterday said the only way for controversial Gen. Jovito Palparan to be confirmed as a two-star general is if he is transferred to another command outside Eastern Visayas.

"If he will be transferred to other commands, he can still be confirmed. And of course, if the opposition against his promotion will be withdrawn, we can still act on his promotion," he said.

But Palparan, head of the 8th Infantry Division based in Samar, brushed this aside, saying he was "not anxious" to have an additional star on his shoulders.

Pichay, House committee vice chair on national defense and security, said it would be "very difficult" for Palparan to be confirmed as a major general due to the strong opposition from congressmen especially those from Eastern Visayas.

"For as long as there are congressmen who are going to oppose his confirmation, we cannot act on it," said Pichay, who was in the city on his way to Basey town in Samar to speak before members of the Public Assistance and Reactions Against Crime.

Since Palparan's promotion was bypassed by the commission, he said the general needed an ad interim reappointment from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He explained that an ad interim appointment has the force and effect of a regular appointment.

Last year, President Arroyo promoted Palparan to the rank of major general prior to his deployment to Eastern Visayas on Feb. 10.

The CA, in its June 8 hearing, did not confirm Palparan's promotion largely due to the opposition by several congressmen who held him responsible for the "series of human rights violations" in Eastern Visayas.

Samar Representatives Catalino Figueroa and Reynaldo Uy had said the "intensified" military operations in the region, particularly in Samar, Eastern Samar and Northern Samar, had resulted in abductions, harassment and killings of a number of activists and civilians.

Several party-list representatives also joined the opposition to Palparan's confirmation due to what they claimed was his poor human rights record.

But Palparan said the decision of the CA to bypass his promotion did not bother him because he was busy with his work as commander of the 8th ID, which is composed of three brigades and nine battalions spread in the provinces of Leyte, Samar, Masbate and parts of Bohol.

"I'd rather concentrate on my work here. I intend to finish my mission in the region," he said, referring to his vow to end the region's insurgency problem from six months to a year.

He also downplayed the opposition lodged by several congressmen against his promotion, saying "it is their democratic rights."

"But what they hurled against me were not all true. Probably, some of their allegations against me have basis but not all…," he said. He declined to elaborate.

VINCENT CABREZA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

SPECIAL FX
A human figure stands outside a house in a Baguio neighborhood, drawing the attention of residents and visitors. The figure is a construction mascot, but neighborhood gossip says it has effectively warded off thieves.

Cebu gov tells Cebuanos to stay calm amid scandals

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia asked for sobriety among Cebuanos amid the scandal hounding President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The governor reiterated her support for Ms Macapagal who won overwhelmingly in Cebu over the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Garcia also asked the people not to believe the opposition, saying opposition leaders were out to destroy the administration and the country as well.

"I call for sobriety. Let us remain calm and unite to protect the elected President of our country. We are for stability in government. We know that this is the crucial ingredient for what we all hope this country will achieve—progress, development. Let us not allow ourselves to be confused and used," Garcia said.

Cebu Rep. Simeon Kintanar, an NPC congressman in Cebu's second district but a supporter of Ms Arroyo, said the planned impeachment case against the President will not prosper in Congress.

Kintanar said majority of members of the House of Representatives are allies of the President, and they did not see any reason to support the move, saying it was too premature to judge the President.

Msgr. Achilles Dakay, the media liaison officer of the Archdiocese of Cebu, said he was clarifying his earlier statements that many in the Catholic Church favored the filing of the impeachment complaint against the President rather than calling for her resignation.

Dakay said he did not say the Church is encouraging the President's impeachment.

Dakay said he just said that the President should be allowed due process.

"I was asked what can I say on the move to impeach the President, I just said if there was that movement, then the President should be given due process. I did not say that we will impeach the President or we will adopt the move," Dakay said.

Dakay said he also based his statements on the previous stand of Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal on the issues against then President Joseph Estrada and Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Dakay made the clarification after a Church official in Cebu clarified that the Cebu archdiocese has no stand yet on the issue.

Episcopal Vicar Msgr. Esteban Binghay said Church officials in Cebu have yet to meet and discuss the issue.

Binghay said he supports the move of Archbishop Oscar Cruz to pursue the "jueteng" inquiry in the Senate so that the truth will come out.

Binghay said if there's enough evidence against the President or her family, appropriate action should be done.

Bid to save Mt. Apo goes international

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Efforts to rehabilitate one of the country's treasures, Mt. Apo, has gained international attention with the Union of Latin American Council signifying its support for the said move.

Mayor Rodolfo Gantuanco said council officials are willing to fund the rehabilitation program being undertaken by the local government and other stakeholders to save the country's highest peak from total destruction.

First conquered in 1899, Mt. Apo has consistently been frequented by local and foreign tourists, including environmentalists and mountain enthusiasts over the years. It was closed for four years because of the desecration of its natural landscape and was only opened this year.

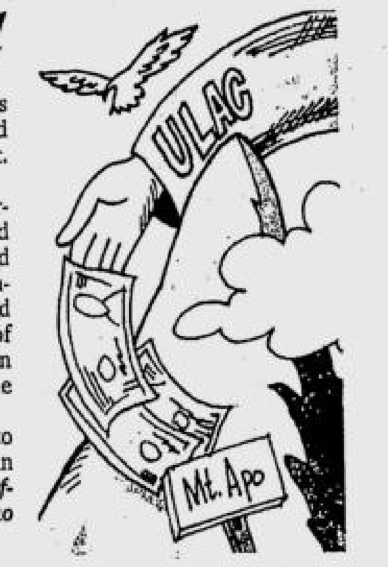
Also involved in the rehabilitation of the mountain is the nongovernment organization Mt. Apo Foundation, Inc. (Mafi) and local governments of the towns of Magpet and Makilala in North Cotabato.

The "inflow" of support came after Gantuanco and several environmentalists made a trip to the United States for an investment tour.

"I am very happy that this global institution expressed their support in protecting Mt. Apo," the mayor said.

Mafi executive director Ermelio Libre, who accompanied Gantuanco in the United States, said some environmentalists in the States showed concern for the condition of Mt. Apo, which is also known as the home of the Philippine Eagle.

The mountain is also home to over 270 bird species, more than a hundred of them endemic. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



30 high school students in Pampanga hurt after classroom floor collapses

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Thirty students of the Pampanga High School here were hurt on Wednesday when the wooden floor of their classroom collapsed.

At least six students were taken to the nearby Jose B. Lingad Memorial Hospital for treatment.

Dr. Leilani Mangulabnan, city health officer, said one of the victims, Jonalyn Luna, has a congenital heart ailment and was traumatized by the accident.

Mangulabnan said the hands of Ronald Bognot were broken due to the fall. Four other students, identified as Jennifer Chica, Fatima Mama, Jessie Pamintuan and Charina Mae Mariano, were treated at the JBLMH.

Bruises

The 30 other first year high school students in the class suffered bruises.

The students belonged to the Creme-1 section. They held their science class at Room 7 of the main building, also called Gabaldon, which was built by American Thomasite teachers in 1904.

Aliza Deili Layaque, 12, said she fell into the murky 3-feet high floodwater that had accumulated below the floor. Her classmates immediately pulled her out.

JV Dizon, her classmate, said half of the floor space in the 7 meters by 8 meters room collapsed after the members of the class hurried toward the door at the end of classes at about 11:20 a.m.

Dizon said one of his classmates, whom they call "Kalbo," blocked the door.

Too heavy

School officials said the combined weight of the group of students concentrated on that section of the room caused the floor to collapse.

Purisima Pineda, the class adviser, said this was the first of such incident since she started teaching at the PHS, the province's biggest public high school.

Dr. Imelda Macaspac, PHS principal, said all 18 classrooms at the Gabaldon Building would be closed to ensure the safety of students.

Parents went to the school by noon and castigated school officials for allowing the continued use of the dilapidated building.

The move would force some 1,000 students to hold classes in other classrooms or under trees. The school has 9,300 students this year. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Australia OKs ₱126M in population program aid

AN AGREEMENT that will enable the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID) to provide A$2.8 million (about P126 million) in grants to two population projects in the Philippines was signed on June 9 by Ambassador Tony Hely of Australia and Dr Zahidul Huque, country representative of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

The population initiatives, which will help promote adolescent reproductive health and conduct advocacy work on population and reproductive health policy and programs in the Philippines, will be co-financed with UNFPA, according to a news release from the Australian Embassy.

The four-and-a-half-year project on "Institutionalizing Adolescent Reproductive Health Through Lifeskills-Based Education" will develop teaching and learning materials and methodologies to enable young people to take greater responsibility for their own lives by making healthy life choices, resisting negative pressures, and minimizing harmful behaviors, the release said.

Specifically, the project aims to improve knowledge, behavior, attitudes and practices of students and out-of-school youth on adolescent reproductive health concerns such as sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, violence against women and children, family planning and responsible parenthood, and fertility.

Access by students and out-of-school youth to relevant information and services will be increased while the delivery of adolescent reproductive health education and services will be improved.

The project will be implemented by UNFPA and the Department of Education in the provinces of Ifugao, Mountain Province, Masbate, Bohol, Eastern Samar, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Firecrackers, not gunshots, heard outside gov's house, cops say

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ILAGAN, Isabela—The "gunshots" that the aides of Gov. Maria Gracia Padaca heard on Sunday near the governor's house here were actually the sound of exploding firecrackers and were not connected to a supposed attempt to attack the governor's house, police said.

In their affidavits submitted to the police on Tuesday, Rodel Paquiz, 21, Timothy Tumaneng, 18, and Ronel Vinarao, 18, said they lighted firecrackers at the gates of the California Homes subdivision at past midnight Sunday to scare off dogs near a hut they were staying in.

The subdivision is about 200 meters from the governor's official residence and guesthouse at the provincial capitol compound in Barangay Alibagu.

Exaggerated

Paquiz said reports from Padaca's security aides that the gunshots were connected to an attempt to attack the governor's house were "unsubstantiated" and "exaggerated."

Mexico Geronimo, a council member of Alibagu village, also submitted an affidavit to the police to support the statements of Paquiz, Tumaneng and Vinarao.

Paquiz said they were drinking that night in a hut and decided to light up some firecrackers when they saw stray dogs.

The police kept the remnants of exploded firecrackers found near the subdivision's gates as evidence.

Apologies

The three men said they wanted to apologize to the governor for what had happened.

Padaca, however, refused to accept the police's version of the incident. She said the incident could be a move to scare her due to her recent statements against "jueteng" operations in the province.

She said the incident would not discourage her from fighting jueteng.

"If (my enemies) think I was scared, sorry. But this does not mean I would not beef up my security," she said earlier.

Elizabeth Vinarao, mother of Ronel, said Padaca refused to believe the statements of her son and his two companions when they met at the Isabela police office.

"I was shamed in front of the police. [Padaca] told me that she believed [the story of] her security escorts more than other people's version of the incident. I told her that her security men should have looked for the suspects in the area before they fired their guns indiscriminately," said Vinarao.

Padaca earlier said her security aides heard three gunshots and saw red laser pointers aimed at her house at past midnight Sunday.

She said her aides saw at least three men about 200 meters from her official residence and guesthouse.

Padaca's aides fired at the men but it was not clear if anybody was hit. Police said the aides did not find any suspect.

PADACA

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2 women presidents save old tree

By Marlon Ramos and Romulo O. Ponte
Los Baños, Laguna

A CENTURY-OLD *dao* (*Dracontomeleon dao*) tree on the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) campus has just gotten another lease on life, thanks to two women presidents: President Macapagal-Arroyo and UP President Emerlinda Roman.

On Thursday, Ms Arroyo ordered Environment Secretary Michael Defensor to stave off efforts to cut down the tree, which has been the subject of debate in the academic community for over a year now. That same day, Roman promised to stop the cutting of the tree.

UPLB Chancellor Wilfredo P. David reportedly wanted to take another swing at the tree in front of the Student Union building despite the opposition of environmentalists and experts who have found it healthy and not hazardous to life and property.

As early as 9:30 a.m. on June 9, UPLB landscape architect Dr. Leonido Naranja was allegedly seen with six unidentified men in the area where the *dao* tree stands. One of the men reportedly told an alumnus that they were instructed to trim the upper branches of the tree on June 10 and to cut it down on June 11 or 12.

The men, it was learned, were employees of the Forest Products Research and Development Institute (FPRDI), an agency under the Department of Science and Technology. They were requested by David to help topple the tree.

Gil Aller, a member of an alumni group opposing the felling of the tree, said they immediately called up a fellow alumnus, who he described as close to Ms Arroyo, to ask the President to save the tree, said to be among the heritage trees of the university.

Hours later, Aller said the official called up environmentalist-architect and UPLB faculty member Susan Aquino, to inform them that the President had acceded to their request.

The official, he said, also sent Aquino a text message he received from Ms Arroyo, which read: "I already instructed [Environment Secretary] Mike [Michael Defensor] to stop the cutting of the tree in UPLB."

When reached by the INQUIRER's environment reporter yesterday, Defensor confirmed that he received the President's instructions. He said he sent a team of DENR technical men to UPLB to study the situation.

"We are happy because the reaction of the President was very fast. It only showed the President's genuine concern for the environment [despite the scandals she's facing now]," Aller said.

Vigilance

Aquino said she had also sought the help of Sen. Jamby Madrigal who had earlier accused David and other university officials of being behind the illegal cutting down of trees inside UPLB.

Madrigal said she was attending a Senate session on Monday when she received a call on her mobile phone informing her of David's plan.

She said she immediately called up Roman to ask for help in blocking the plan. Roman gave her word to do whatever she could to save the tree, she said.

"I was glad because during our short conversation, Dr. Roman told me that she too understands the concerns of those who oppose tree cutting inside the UPLB," Madrigal said in a phone interview.

The senator admitted that Roman was very instrumental in stopping the supposed cutting down of the tree.

She said she explained to the UP president that the issue was not parochial to UPLB, but rather one of governance.

Last year, Madrigal filed a resolution in the Senate committee on environment to investigate the alleged unhampered "illegal logging" inside UPLB. Almost a year later, the committee has yet to start its inquiry.

THE DEFIANT "dao" tree near the Student Union building of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños. ROMULO O. PONTE

The UPLB administration has denied Madrigal's accusations.

The senator assailed Defensor for his alleged noncommittal stand on the issue. "The *dao* tree is a heritage not just of UPLB, but of the Filipino as well. The secretary should do his mandate to conserve the environment," she said.

Denial

David refused to be interviewed by the INQUIRER.

His assistant for academic matters, Maria Cristeta Cuaresma, said the chancellor was busy with official matters. She said her boss was in an important meeting and could not spare even five minutes for an interview.

When asked about the supposed request of David for FPRDI men to cut the *dao*, Cuaresma said: "I don't think there is any activity with regard to that tree."

"As far as I know, there is no such request. But I'm not [authorized] to talk about it," she added.

Josephine Go, director of the Office of Publications under the Office of the Chancellor, said she could not comment on the issue.

A letter obtained by the INQUIRER showed that David indeed asked FPRDI Director Florence Soriano for "assistance in felling the *dao* tree in front of the SU Building." Dated June 6, 2005, it was signed by the chancellor and was received by Soriano's office the next day.

"We understand that FPRDI is equipped with the required tools and expertise to perform such very specialized task... We will provide the necessary manpower for the ancilliary works related to this job..." David wrote.

He added that "experts have diagnosed that tree to be weak." He said the tree was leaning 20 degrees to its side because of its heavy crown and weak root system.

"We look forward to accomplishing the task on June 8, 2005 before the start of classes," he said.

Upon receiving the request, Dominador Alonzo, FPRDI deputy director, said they immediately sent one of their personnel to attend a meeting with university officials.

"It is just elementary for us to heed the request of the chancellor because we are occupying a property that UPLB owns," Alonzo said in an interview in his office.

He, however, maintained that they never did a study on the tree to find out if it should be cut down.

Forester Pablito Alcachupas, the FPRDI employee who met with the university officials, said he was being extra careful not to violate existing laws on tree cutting.

He admitted that UPLB officials failed to show any tree-cutting permit from the DENR.

Danger

Early last year, David fueled the controversy when his office was given permission by then DENR Secretary Elisea G. Gozun to cut the tree. Gozun reconsidered her decision and eventually canceled her order in July 2004, after receiving contrary opinions.

In his request to Gozun dated March 22, 2004, David listed his reasons for his recommendation, including the "imminent danger [that the leaning tree may pose] on lives and properties."

Ramon A. Razal, head of the College of Forestry and Natural Resources (CFNR) said the tree was "ailing," "overmature," and "increasingly leaning." Its roots would destroy the basement and could collapse anytime without warning and hence, needed to be cut down, he said.

Aquino's husband, Perry Ong, a vocal advocate to save the *dao*, asked in an open letter to fellow environmentalists that if the CFNR's findings were true, "why not apply the modern technology available called tree surgery?"

To cut the tree should always be an action of last recourse, he said.

He questioned David's plan to cut down the tree in the absence of students and faculty members who, he said, had overwhelming sentiments against the idea.

Sturdy

Even forestry experts in UPLB have found that the tree, although leaning, is sturdy.

Dr. Arman Palijon, an urban forester, told Aquino that "the tree is hollow (about one meter from the base) but it could be saved if the top is pruned. It is not a hazard to the SU building and will not fall as alleged."

A similar position was taken by Director Celso P. Diaz of the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau.

"We recommend that the *dao* tree should not be cut and instead the University shall apply the following measures: Prune the heavy crown of the tree and cut some big branches, and second, put a propping structure that will strengthen the position of the tree thereby reducing its leaning position, and preventing it from falling down."

Diaz contended that once the tree was cut, strong winds coming from Mt. Makiling would hit the SU building unhampered.

The atmosphere around the building could also change significantly because there will be no more trees to absorb the heat, he said. Planting replacements would take a lifetime or generations of waiting, he added.

The GARCI tapes:

SA LIKOD NG pagba- BALITA

INQ TV

Isang special report Huwebes, alas 10 n g sa ABC

Probers say bar slay suspect could be close to car owner's family

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WHILE they have yet to match a name with the face of the man suspected of killing a television director in a Makati City bar a week ago, police yesterday said they were close to pinning him down.

Luis Santiago was killed after a brawl broke out outside the V-Bar in Ayala Center, Makati, on June 8.

Six other bar guests and a policeman were hurt in the incident.

"We are closing in on the suspect. We are getting there," said Chief Inspector Manuel Santos Jr., chief of the Makati Police Department Criminal Investigation Division.

Close relative?

Santos said their investigation was now focused on the possibility that the suspect was most likely a close relative of the family which had claimed ownership of a pickup that witnesses said was used by the suspect as a getaway vehicle.

Claim

"The car—a mocha-colored, heavily tinted Toyota Hi-Lux was brand new," Santos told the INQUIRER. The claim that the owners did not know who took the vehicle from the garage was highly impossible.

"If you had a brand-new vehicle, would you lend your vehicle to somebody other than a family member?" he added.

On Friday last week, the Makati police had in its hands the 2005 model pickup, with plate number XTW-280, which they had traced to a house in Hillsborough Subdivision, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Turnover

The pickup is reportedly owned by Charito Angeles, who is out of the country.

The vehicle was turned over to the police by her mother Estrella.

Witnesses had told police that they saw the gunman, known only as Oliver, head toward the Toyota Hi-Lux to retrieve the handgun he fired several times in the midst of a brawl at around 4 a.m. on Wednesday last week outside the popular night spot.

So far, police have come up with an artist's sketch of the suspect.

"I gave Estrella's lawyer time to speak with her so she could help us solve this case," said Santos.

"Who else would have known the identity of the person who took the vehicle that night than her, if the registered owner was not around?" he added.

Upon checking the car's interiors, Southern Police District scene-of-the-crime operatives found a golf bag inside the pickup.

No weapon

Santos said investigators did not find any weapon inside the vehicle.

"We are focused on this case. We want to solve this case, and we will," said Santos.

Jail guards' aid eyed in 'Pajero Lady' escape

By DJ Yap

THE HUNT is on for the "Pajero Lady."

Quezon City police are now scouring the city in efforts to find Maria Lourdes de Guzman, a detainee at the Correctional Institute for Women, who escaped Monday night from the St Luke's Hospital where she had undergone an operation.

De Guzman achieved notoriety by going around posh subdivisions in a Pajero van and talking household help into allowing her inside the house, where she would allegedly steal jewelry and other valuables.

Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Division chief Procopio Lipana said De Guzman could have connived with her escorts, since they gave conflicting reports about the escape.

The escorts told police that three armed men helped the convict escape, Lipana said. They, however, gave the Correctional Institute head a different version, saying De Guzman escaped when she asked to use the rest room.

Correctional Institute Supt. Rachel Ruelo told the Inquirer that she was recommending the temporary suspension of the guards, whose identities were not disclosed, as part of an initial investigation on the incident, but added that this would have to be approved by the Bureau of Corrections.

De Guzman was arrested early this year and was given a jail term of six to 20 years in prison for robbery and later detained at the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong City. She is also the subject of a string of arrest warrants for estafa and theft, among other charges.

In 2003, De Guzman allegedly staged her own death and assumed the identity of "Josephine Garcia."

A fingerprint check when she was arrested, however, revealed that she was really De Guzman.
With Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

'AN ACT OF HATE OR REVENGE'

3 face sedition raps for posters

By DJ Yap

TWO YOUTH leaders and their driver found themselves in jail after they were caught pasting posters critical of President Macapagal-Arroyo before dawn Tuesday.

The three—Rolando Guevarra, 23, and Carmen Balagtas, 19, of Akbayan Youth, and driver Rodel Badong, 30, were caught pasting posters on an island along Kalayaan Avenue corner Matalino Street in Barangay Central.

The posters showed the President as the local comic book and movie super heroine Darna's nemesis Valentina, with the words "President Evil," and "The Evil Continues."

At the bottom of the posters was written: "*Sa Hunyo 30, mamamayan, lumaban ka* (On June 30, citizens, fight for your rights)!"

A mobile patrol unit apprehended the three at about 2 a.m., and recovered an L-300 van, pails of glue, broomsticks and about 200 of the offending posters, police said.

The Central Police District initially charged the three with violations of Article 153 of the Revised Penal Code, or tumults and other public disturbances, and the antilittering ordinance.

Supporters of the three were about to pay the P1,000 bail initially recommended by a Quezon City fiscal, when they learned that the charges had been elevated to inciting to sedition, a crime punishable by up to six years imprisonment and a fine of P2,000.

Akbayan and other militant groups criticized the move, saying it was meant to intimidate protesters. Vandalism and disturbance of public order were the charges usually leveled against those caught posting propaganda materials, they said.

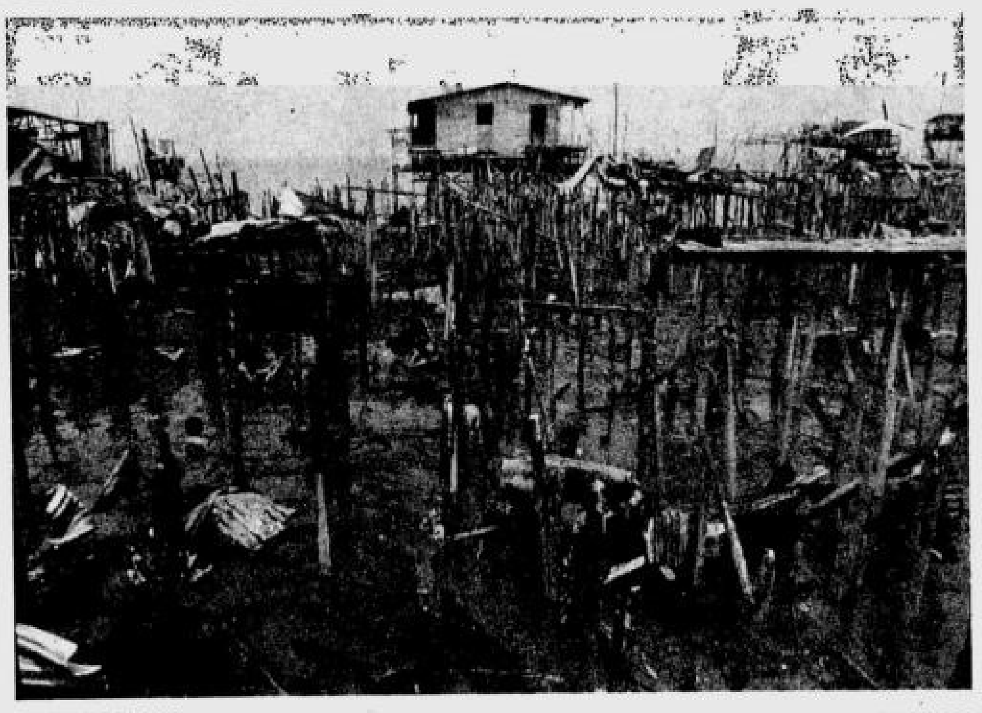
"We find the charges extremely alarming. They just pasted posters, and that was already considered sedition," said Maricris Cabreros of Akbayan Youth.

Quezon City assistant prosecutor Meynardo Bautista defended his decision, saying he had done so after he had reviewed the case and consulted the city prosecutor.

He said he studied Article 142, and realized that the crime committed by the three fell more appropriately under inciting to sedition since it satisfied a provision—"to inflict an act of hate or revenge"—upon a person in office.

Under the penal code, inciting to sedition is an act by a person, who, while not directly committing seditious acts, incites others to do such acts through speeches, writings, banners and the like.

The three were released later after posting bail of P12,000 each.



JOAN BONDOC

AFTERMATH
Stilts are all that remain of houses in a coastal barangay in Navotas which was hit by fire Tuesday.

Single antidrug drive for Metro planned

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A UNIFIED plan to win the battle against drugs.

Local government units in Metro Manila and nearby provinces are set to forge a single antidrug program aimed at eradicating the drug problem.

With Makati as host, some 108 city and municipal representatives from the National Capital Region, and the provinces of Rizal, Bulacan and Cavite, will meet tomorrow to draft a common campaign, the Makati City Hall announced yesterday.

"The shared experiences will form the basis for drawing up plans and programs to achieve our common vision of a drug-free metropolis," said Makati Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado in a statement.

Mercado is concurrent chair of the Association of Metro Manila Anti-Drug Abuse Councils, a coordinating body of the antidrug councils in the metropolis.

He also heads the Makati Anti-Drug Abuse Council, which has been cited for its antidrug drive. Of Makati's 33 barangays, 30 have been declared drug-free.

Supervisor toys with gun, killed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A GUN is not a toy.

Antonio Caro, 44, was reportedly playing with a .38-cal. revolver Tuesday in Binangonan, Rizal, when it went off.

A bullet hit him in the mouth and exited through the nape.

Caro was the younger brother of Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group head Andres Caro.

Police said Caro was seen holding the revolver at 8:45 a.m. while at his table at the Cafegon Iceplant in Barangay Libis.

Caro, the supervisor of the plant, had just finished collecting payments from their customers.

He was in a jolly mood that morning, his secretary Racquel Vital told PO1 Froilan Quisquino.

Suddenly, while Vital was busy with her computer, a gunshot rang inside the room.

She looked back and saw Caro slumped on his table. Blood was all over his face.

Dead on arrival

He was brought to the Binangonan General Hospital which was near the plant. But Caro was already dead.

Binangonan police chief Raymundo Oliquiano said that based on the account of witnesses, the shooting was an accident.

The revolver was owned by the company and was usually given to their security guards who man the compound only at night.

Police recovered the gun, which was still loaded with four bullets, Quisquino said.

Some employees at the ice plant said Caro, though a brother of a police official, was not used to handling guns, Rizal provincial director Leopoldo Santiago said.

People who knew Caro told police that the incident was not the first time Caro accidentally fired a gun.

A relative told police Caro also allegedly accidentally wounded an employee about 10 years ago.

Caro was also playing with a gun at that time.

Mindanao to declare independence if GMA is ousted

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

HERE'S something opposition leaders and street parliamentarians should think about if they insist on having Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ousted through mob rule: Mindanao will declare independence if GMA is kicked out.

Mindanao's declaration of independence would be premised on the unconstitutional and illegal ouster of the President.

"We're sick and tired of the antics of the leaders in imperial Manila. They easily change leadership based on people power, which is actually the rule of the mob," said Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte.

The controversial mayor was referring to Edsa 1 and Edsa 2 people power uprisings that ousted two presidents: Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada, respectively.

Duterte, a very popular figure in Mindanao, yesterday called on Christians, Muslims and *lumads* to join hands in establishing a separate Mindanao republic should leadership change hands in Manila.

The idea is fast catching fire, says former Transportation Secretary Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez, who's also a former congressman of Davao del Norte.

Alvarez says that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Moro National Liberation Front like the idea of a federal republic of Mindanao where Muslims would have their own nation and Christians, theirs.

Alvarez told me about the plan months ago before the current trouble in Manila erupted. He said there was a strong move by the opposition to unseat GMA by whatever means.

"If that happens," Alvarez told me then, "Mindanao will secede from the Philippines."

Duterte says Mindanao has always been a poor relation to Luzon and Metro Manila, so that "they get the big slice of the bread while we in Mindanao get the crumbs."

Mindanao, which has a population of 20 million (2 million of which is Muslim), accounts for 65 percent of the country's gross domestic product. However, the second biggest island gets only 30 percent of the national budget.

Alvarez says that only 15 percent of the proceeds from foreign loans reaches Mindanao, citing figures from the National Economic and Development Authority.

"That's why *hangtud karon pobre pa gihapon ang Mindanao* (up to now Mindanao is still poor)," Alvarez says.

That's unusual for a region that is the richest in natural resources.

Mindanao has everything the country produces. It has forests, mines, aquatic resources, rice, bananas, copra and many more. And yet, it's just a backwater area to Manila and Luzon.

Eight provinces in Mindanao, are among the country's poorest.

Although it is the second biggest island after Luzon, Mindanao does not have proportional representation in the national leadership. You can only count Cabinet members and other officials occupying national positions from Mindanao on the fingers of one hand.

Mindanao is considered a wastebasket by the national leadership. For example, abusive police and soldiers are "exiled" to the region.

I asked Alvarez yesterday how popular the idea of an independent Mindanao is, and how it would solve the Moro insurgency problem. He said Christian and Muslim leaders have been talking and the consensus is that Muslims should be left alone to rule themselves and non-Muslims theirs.

There would be a federal republic, the one being advocated by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel.

Asked how the military in Mindanao looks at the idea, Alvarez said that right now, 60 percent of the military assigned to the island are for it.

"Many more will be convinced to join the movement if leaders in Manila can't get their act together."

That, indeed, is something for those advocating leadership change to stop and consider.

Acquittal for alleged bag man

ONE OF several people tagged in an alleged plot last year to assassinate Speaker Jose de Venecia, plant bombs around Metro Manila and overthrow the government, was acquitted of the crimes yesterday.

Benjamin Sim, an accountant accused of financing a plot against the government, was found innocent of rebellion charges by a Quezon City court for lack of evidence.

Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 81 Judge Ma. Theresa Yadao said the prosecution failed to establish that Sim committed rebellion.

Yadao noted that the crime of rebellion involves an organized and armed uprising "in a vast movement of man and a complex net of intrigues and plot," which was absent in the case against Sim.

With several other people, Sim was also implicated with the discovery of bombs outside the interior and defense department buildings in Quezon City and the Santuario de San Antonio church in Makati City in June 2004. The bombs were defused before they could explode. *DJ Yap*

Boy with leukemia, man with eye disease appeal for your help

BOTH of them need your help.

Instead of playing outdoors, 4-year-old Hanz Brudo is currently staying at the Philippine Children's Medical Center, undergoing treatment for acute lymphocytic leukemia.

He has been undergoing chemotherapy since December 2003.

Meanwhile, Francis Balatero, 50, has been diagnosed with post-traumatic adherent leukoma with secondary glaucoma of the right eye, a disease that slowly causes the eyes to go blind.

Doctors at the Department of Ophthalmology of the Philippine General Hospital have estimated the amount of Francis' medicines to be around P52,000.

On the other hand, the cost of Hanz's treatments averages P4,000 per session.

PCMC has estimated the total cost of his chemotherapeutic regimen to amount to about P113,000.

Francis and Hanz are appealing to kindhearted readers for financial and medical help.

Interested parties may contact Francis through Corazon Pidot at 297-0542 and Hanz's parents, Susan and Marlon, at 0921-5915883.

Donations for Francis can be sent through the Marikina Branch of the Philippine National Bank at account number 295-598311-7.

Meanwhile, those for Hanz can be deposited through Landbank Marikina branch at 2726-0269-15.

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2 cops gunned down at fish market

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SIX MEN shot to death two policemen outside a crowded fish market in Malabon City Tuesday night.

Police identified the victims as PO2 Melvin P. Mañalac, 40, a member of the local intelligence unit, and SPO1 Rodolfo Gatus, 42, of the PNP Bomb Data Center in Camp Crame.

According to investigators, Mañalac and Gatus were shot at about 10 p.m. in the middle of a crowd at the Malabon Fish Market on Estrella Street in Barangay Tañong.

The suspects approached the victims from behind and shot them in the head, police said.

Eldest son

Mañalac, the eldest son of former Malabon police chief and current city counselor Alfonso "Boyong" Mañalac, died instantly.

Mañalac was the second son of Alfonso to die in the hands of assassins.

Gatus, who was hit 14 times, was brought by bystanders to the hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Witnesses told police the suspects took the lawmen's service firearms before they casually walked away and commandeered two tricycles which sped toward C-4 Road.

"The killing was skillfully done," said Malabon police director Chief Supt. Moises Guevarra.

The INQUIRER gathered that Gatus had just bought fish from the market where he was met by Mañalac.

The two men, who were both in casual clothes, were walking in the parking area of the market when the suspects struck.

Rebel hitmen eyed

Guevarra said they were looking into reports that Mañalac and Gatus were gunned down by members of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), a breakaway group of the New People's Army.

The official said RPA-ABB members had been reported to be collecting revolutionary tax from vendors and stall owners.

"Regular police presence in the Consignacion (fish market) could have hampered the Sparrow's collection of illegal taxes," said Guevarra, referring to the communist unit's old name.

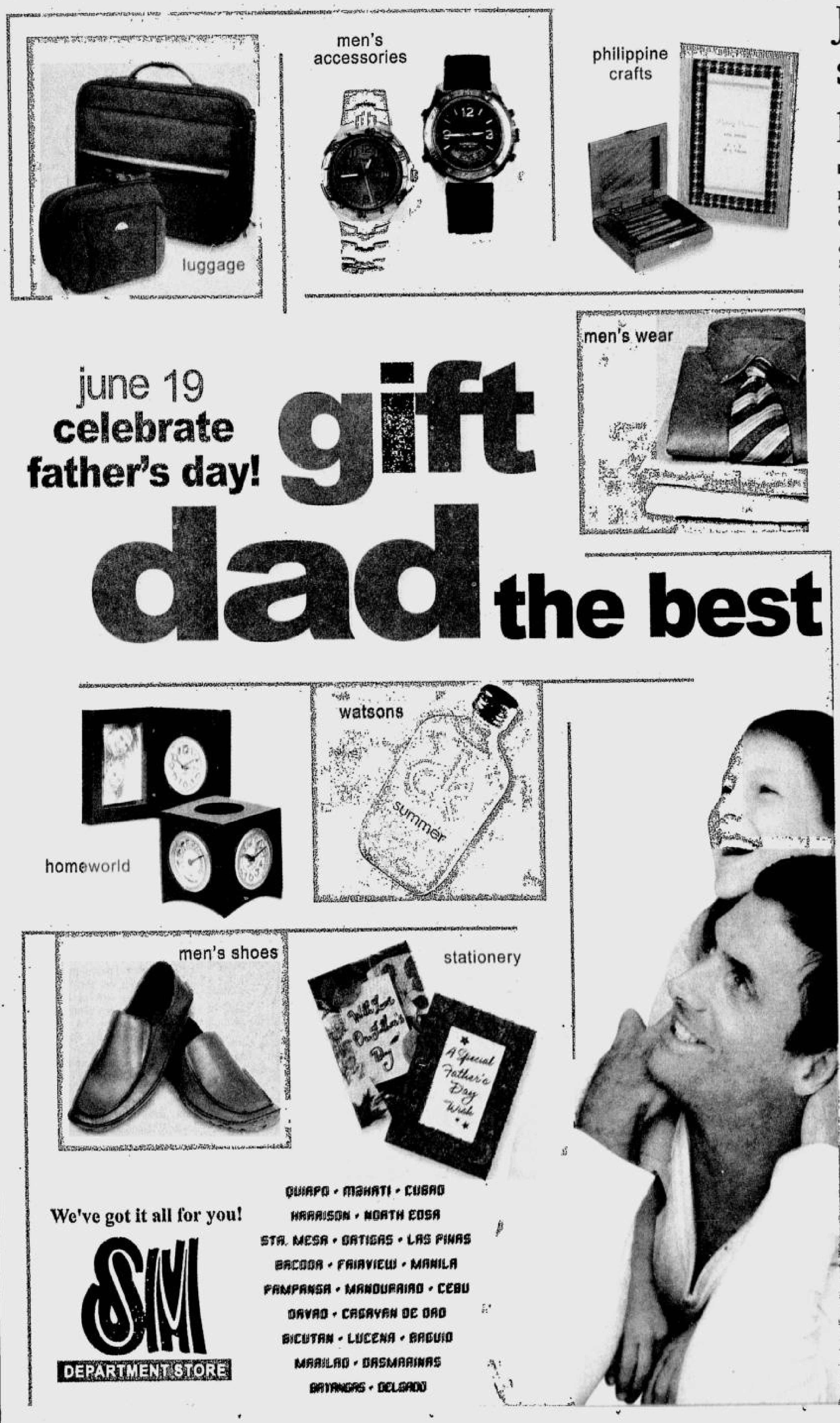
A stall owner said different groups claiming to be members of leftist or rightist groups ask money from vendors.

Another angle being eyed by investigators is revenge.

"Manalac's father was a former chief of police who, in the line of duty, could have stepped on the toes of some people who might have taken revenge on his sons," he said.

Mañalac's father, whose life story had been turned into a movie, said in a television interview that after the death of his other son in 1998, he tried to dissuade Mañalac from entering the police force.

"But he still insisted on becoming [a policeman]," the councilor said.



Japanese shot in Pasig payroll rob

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

EMPLOYEES of an engineering firm were not the only ones waiting for their salaries yesterday—so were four armed robbers.

In broad daylight, the four gunmen shot a driver and the finance manager of Yamato Engineering before taking some P300,000 cash.

Acting Pasig City police director Senior Supt. Celso Beltran said the money could have been the firm's payroll.

Police said Kinechi Takahashi, 57, and driver Antonio Roxas, 60, had just withdrawn the money from a bank when the incident happened at 2 p.m.

Roxas and Takahashi, on board a white Nissan Bluebird, were stopped at the corner of Sheridan and Pioneer Streets by robbers on board two motorcycles, who came from behind.

Two of the robbers got off the motorcycles, pulled out .45-cal. pistols and opened fire on the victims.

One of the robbers opened the left door of the car and took the black bag containing the money.

The robbers immediately went back to their motorcycles and escaped, leaving the victims bleeding.

Roxas sustained four gunshot wounds in the body while Takahashi suffered a gunshot wound in his left arm, police said.

Taxi driver Florante Ilao, whose cab was right behind the victims' car, rushed to help the victims.

He brought Roxas and Takahashi to the Medical City where they underwent treatment.

Police said Takahashi had been declared out of danger, but Roxas remained critical as of yesterday afternoon.

Mandaluyong amends truck, car ban code

THE MANDALUYONG City government is giving trucks an extra hour to pass through selected roads in the city.

Not only that. Cars previously banned from city streets on certain days, based on the number coding scheme, can now pass through the city for a few hours.

The city council has amended the local traffic code to include the two new policies.

Previously, trucks were banned from selected routes from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

With the amendment, the ban now starts an hour later, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

In the morning, the old truck ban schedule stays. Trucks are banned from city roads from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Cargo trucks, gravel and sand trucks, and other trucks with eight wheels or more, whose gross vehicle weights exceed 4,500 kilograms, are included in the ban.

These trucks will only be allowed to use Shaw Boulevard, Martinez Street, Boni Avenue, Kalentong Street, Ortigas Avenue, Nueve de Pebrero Street and Aglipay Street during the hours outside the ban schedule.

In the same amendment, the city council also gave window hours from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the implementation of the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program.

Because of this, a car whose license plate number ends, for instance, in 1 or 2 and was previously banned from the streets from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Mondays, can now go around the city every Monday during the five-hour window.

The ban remains from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., and resumes at 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

In a statement, Mayor Neptali Gonzales II said the changes "would primarily help investors in the city." *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

GOLF: US Open, First Round; 10 p.m.; ESPN—The year's second major tees off at Pinehurst, North Carolina.

BASEBALL: MLB–8 a.m. (r-6 p.m.); ESPN—Check out this midweek baseball treat

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

One to go for Alaska and Shell

GAME TODAY (*Ynares Center*)
4:45 p.m.—Alaska vs Red Bull
7:35 p.m.—Shell vs Purefoods

By June Navarro

AS THE worst offensive team in the conference, Purefoods will need more than just a one-man show from Markus Melvin.

The Hotdogs could not find any answer when Shell forced the high-scoring Melvin into a maze of errors and moved to the threshold of a semifinal stint with an 86-79 victory over Purefoods last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

The most turnover-prone import with his 6.3 miscues a game, Melvin committed three of the TJ Hotdogs' last four mistakes in their final four possessions to practically hand the win to Shell.

"We knew that most of their attempts will come from Melvin," said Shell coach Leo Austria, whose wards moved closer to a semifinal showdown against top-seeded Talk 'N Text.

The 6-foot-9 Melvin, who keyed Purefoods' best-of-three series victory over FedEx in the wild-card phase, escaped with 29 points and 22 rebounds, but had eight of the team's 19 turnovers.

Ajani Williams swatted four of Melvin's shots and had 27 points and 20 rebounds to lead Shell.

In the second game, Alaska defeated Red Bull Barako, 89-80, in Game 1 of their series.

Meanwhile, Willie Miller of Talk 'N Text is leading the race for the best player of the conference award with 1,276 statistical points. Mark Caguioa (1,882) and Eric Menk (1,824) of Barangay Ginebra lead the statistical race for the MVP trophy.

The scores:

First game

SHELL 86—Williams 27, Dela Cruz 16, Alvarez 15, Mamaril 11, Yap 8, Calagulo 5, Ferreria 4, Sharma 0, Sotto 0, Tubid 0.

PUREFOODS 79—Melvin 29, Raymundo 15, Yap 11, Evangelista 7, Castillo 6, Laure 4, Limpot 3, Espinosa 2, Simon 2, Artadi 0, Madrid 0, Yee 0.

Quarters: 23-13, 45-31, 60-54, 86-79.

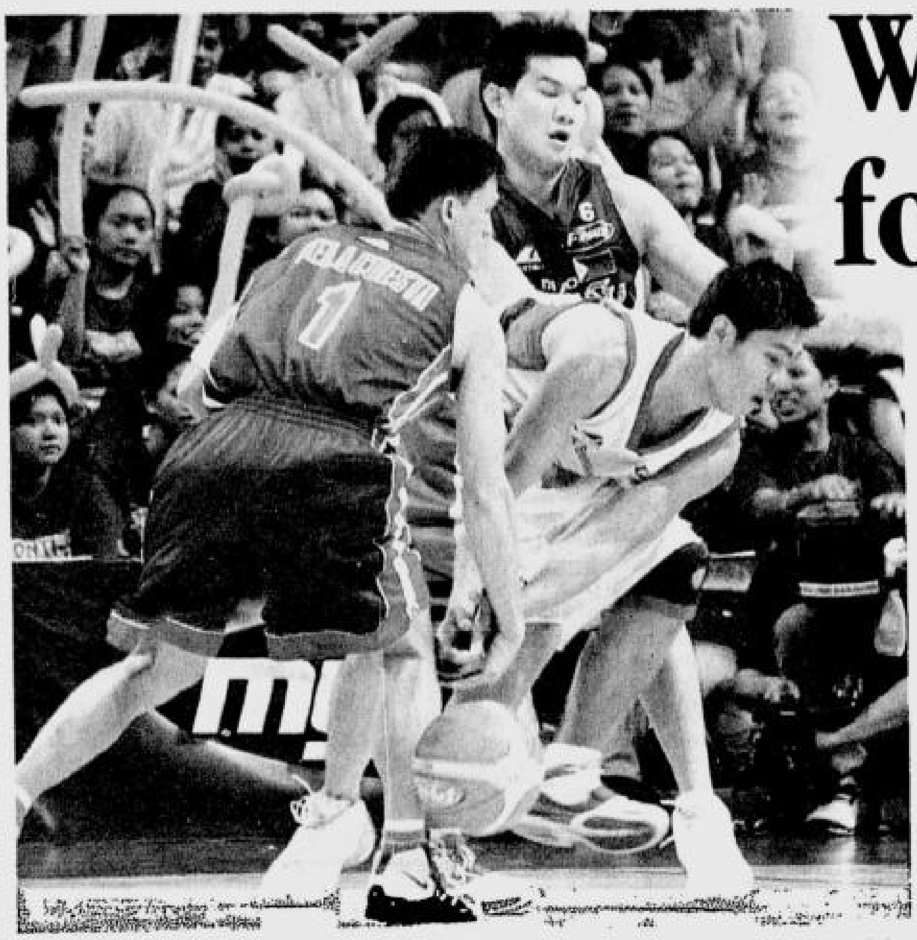
Second Game

ALASKA 89—Simpkins 20, Hugnatan 20, Cariaso 20, Cortez 13, Allado 8, Hawkins 4, Cablay 4, Thoss 0.

RED BULL 80—Barron 20, Villanueva 17, Torion 14, Asaytono 10, Tugade 7, Bagulo 6, Ybañez 3, Gahol 3, Valenzuela 0, Meneses 0, Felhl 0.

Quarters: 25-17, 48-34, 70-64, 89-80

Welcoat guns for title anew



WELCOAT'S Leo Najorda tries to break free from Montana's Francis Mercado and Erick dela Cuesta (l) in Game 3 of their best-of-five title series.
RYAN LIM

GAME TODAY (*Cuneta Astrodome*)
3:30 p.m.—Montaña vs Welcoat
(*Game 4 of best-of-five finals*)

FACING the embarrassing prospect of getting swept out of the PBL Unity Cup finals series, Montaña Jewels head coach Robert Sison knew his players needed all the motivation they could get against the determined Welcoat Paints.

"I told the players we made history by winning Montaña's first championship last conference," he said. "So why not make history again by coming back in this series? And it's good they responded to my call."

That dream still lives even as Welcoat tries to finish off Montaña anew in Game 4 of the best-of-five series at 3:30 p.m. today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Paintmasters needed just one more win to claim their sixth title. But the Jewels clearly came prepared and it showed in an 89-73 Game 3 triumph last Tuesday.

The Jewels dominated right from the tip-off, with burly Jon Dan Salvador drilling 29 points and grabbing 18 rebounds.

Alex Compton, the Jewels' sweet-shooting veteran guard, bucked an ankle injury to finish with 19 points.

Even if the emphatic victory boosted the Jewels' confidence, Sison stressed that the Paintmasters still have the momentum.

"Every game is a no-tomorrow for us," he said. "Anytime they can finish us off. I'm sure they're going to make adjustments."

Welcoat still leads the series at 2-1, and Montaña still needs to win two more games to bag its second straight title.

The task isn't impossible. In 1998, Dr. J-Ana Freezer came back from a 0-2 deficit to claim the crown.

"We have to be extra patient offensively and defensively," said Welcoat coach Caloy Garcia. "We also have to stop Jon Dan and Alex."

Anthony Washington averages 17.3 points for Welcoat in the series.

Jasmine W. Payo

UAAP weekend features Ateneo-La Salle rivalry

By Francis Ochoa

WHILE serving as a consultant for the Ateneo Blue Eagles, Norman Black has seen up close what a game against the De La Salle University Green Archers feels like.

"No doubt, it's intense," said the grand slam coach of the Philippine Basketball Association. "It relives the days of Crispa-Toyota and those old San Miguel-Ginebra battles.

"The alumni are so into it and the students are so into it and that's what makes the atmosphere so different."

On July 10, amid a roaring sea of blue and green, Black will be literally in the middle of the rivalry as the head coach of the Eagles. And quite surprisingly, Black is the least affected.

"I'm really not as concerned about the rivalry as I am about helping the team win," said Black.

Ateneo and La Salle clash at 4 p.m. on July 10, highlighting the opening weekend schedule of the UAAP's 68th season basketball wars at the Araneta Coliseum.

On July 9, the league opens its new season at 1 p.m. with the traditional parade of teams followed by a doubleheader featuring three of collegiate basketball's traditional heavyweights.

University of Santo Tomas, aching to relive its run in the early '90s when it won four straight titles, takes on University of the Philippines at 2 p.m. while at 4 p.m., Far Eastern University and University of the East, which own a bulk of the trophies the league has handed out so far, take on each other.

The following day, host Adamson battles National University at 2 p.m., preceding the 4 p.m. encounter between the Eagles and the Archers.

The teams' final lineups will be submitted tomorrow.

A thick crowd is expected to pack the Big Dome for the Ateneo-La Salle encounter, mostly because of the interest surrounding Black's appointment as head coach.

The multi-titled mentor said he is gearing his team toward two objectives: Getting in shape and playing defense.

"The UAAP is a fast-paced league, even if the scores don't show it," Black said. "That's why we want to be in the best shape that we can be once the tournament starts.

"Defensively, we want to stop other teams from executing what they want to execute and try to up-tempo the game a little bit."

Ateneo will be led by spitfire guard LA Tenorio, shooter Magnum Membrere and big men JC Intal and Japeth Aguilar.

POC executive board keen on expelling cage body

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee executive board yesterday announced that it will recommend the blacklisting of the Basketball Association of the Philippines for "infringement" of the POC constitution and by-laws."

BAP chair Robert Aventajado said the BAP, which was suspended last May 25 for breach of agreement regarding the formations of the national teams, "has shown little, if no respect, for the POC decision with a series of public pronouncement and actions."

The POC statement added that the BAP moves—primarily its expressed intention to form its own teams for the Southeast Asian Games and the SEA championships despite the POC's creation of an interim body, and its subsequent election of officers—"run against the grain of repentance."

"The BAP had been disrespectful of the POC suspension and, to a certain extent, arrogant in claiming that for as long as they are recognized by their international federation, they will continue to decide on the formation of our national teams to international events," said Aventajado.

But BAP executive vice president Christian Tan said they were merely doing what the POC wants. "They said there is a problem with our organization, so we tried to reorganize by holding elections," Tan told the INQUIRER.

With regard to international competitions, Tan said they are not bragging about the Fiba recognition but are committed to send teams to international meets or risk Fiba suspension.

"We are here for the good of basketball. We held the election to present something different to them (POC) because they said our organization is flawed."

Int'l 9-ball: Bata, Django ready

EFREN 'Bata' Reyes, Francisco 'Django' Bustamante and Alex Pagulayan vow to defend the fort from foreign invasion when the Philippine International Open 9-Ball Championship gets under way on June 25-29 at the Robinsons Galleria Trade Hall.

The three are seeded in the tournament along with 17 international pool stars. The main draw will be composed of 32 players, 12 coming from the qualifying round set on the first two days of competition.

World pool quarterfinalist Marlon Manalo and Asian 9-Ball Tour leg winners Gandy Valle and Ronnie Alcano are expected to cast their lots in the qualifier.

"We'll show that the Filipinos are still the best in billiards," said Reyes in a press conference hosted yesterday by the co-organizing Solar Sports and Puyat Sports at the Harbour City Restaurant in Makati City.

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Ozamiz stakes clean slate versus Forward Taguig

TAGUIG CITY—Southern Conference leader Ozamiz stakes its unblemished 5-0 record when it meets Northern Conference pacesetter Forward Taguig today in a 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship game at the CP Tinga gym here.

Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's Ozamiz cagers are slightly favored in the 6 p.m. contest due to the presence of 6-foot-5 veterans Billy Bansil and Christian Nicdao.

Mayor Freddie Tinga's Taguig squad is out to spoil the start of the Cotta's northern swing in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Philtranco, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Far Eastern Insurance, Nature's Spring, Skygo Motorcyles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam Corp., Ping Ping Lechon, Rough Rider Jeans, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Over at the MSU-IIT gym in Iligan City, Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Crusaders seek their third win in five games against Zamboanga del Norte's Hornbills at 6 p.m.

The Hornbills of Gov. Rolando Yebes, Dipolog Mayor Roberto Uy and Dapitan Mayor Dominador Jalosjos Jr. will go all out in their bid to break into the win column.

Ozamiz is enjoying its best start in the tourney. And so is Taguig, which pins its hopes on Northern Conference player of the month Leo Vilar to lift the team to its fourth victory in five games.

Taguig ripped Far Eastern Insurance-backed Cavite for its third win on May 18, while Ozamiz toppled the Hornbills, 94-87, to improve its record to 5-0 last May 21.

"Ozamiz's frontline is strong and my boys need to put more pressure inside and keep their shooters from scoring," said Taguig coach Danny Gavieres.

NBC games are aired on NBN 4 at 4 p.m. every Sunday and on Prime Channel at 2 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. daily.

SPORTSWATCH

Tuñacao to be trained by Japanese ex-foe

UNEXPECTED things indeed happen in boxing. Former World Boxing Council flyweight champion Malcolm Tuñacao said that when he flies to Japan for training next week, he will have his former foe, Celes Kobayashi, as trainer along with a certain Miura. Tuñacao, who is now managed by Japan's Yasuo Matsuoka, said he will be accompanied in his Japan trip by OPBF minimum weight king Rodel Mayol, who has also hooked up with Matsuoka. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

TM 9-Ball stars enter Cebu tourney

CEBU CITY—The fourth annual Sun Star Super Balita 9-Ball Challenge, the biggest yearly 9-Ball tournament in this Queen City of the South, kicks off on June 23 at the SM City Trade Hall. Cebu City's top cue masters, led by Warren Kiamco and Leonardo "Dodong" Andam, are primed to face their multititled visitors like Asian Tour Manila leg champion Ronnie Alcano, Lee Van Corteza and past Sun Star Super Balita champions Antonio Gabica and Lee Van Corteza. Promising youngsters from the TM Philippine 9-Ball Champions League will also be heading to Cebu for the event. The Bagong Sibol Boys includes Richard "The Golden Boy" Aguilar, Carlo Biado, Jharome Pena, Elmer Kalaquian and "Jeff Bata" de Luna.

La Salle vs SSC lady spikers today

LA Salle and San Sebastian College clash again today at the close of the double-round elimination of the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. The Lady Archers saw their eight-game winning streak snapped by the UST Tigresses, 26-28, 22-25, 25-15, 21-25, last Monday but remained assured of the No. 1 spot in the semis round even if they lose to the Lady Stags. The La Salle-SSC encounter is set at 5 p.m. San Sebastian takes on UST at 3 p.m.

Tagaytay chessers lead team event

ILIGAN CITY—Tagaytay City beat Metro Toril and Davao City in Rounds 2 and 3, respectively, to lead the 2005 National Open Chess Team Championship here. Against Metro Toril, GM Joey Antonio drew with Henry Lopez while Rodolfo Panopio, Edmundo Gatus and Allan Macala won their matches to give Tagaytay a 3.5-0.5 victory. Antonio hurdled NM Prospero Cruz while Gatus bested Reynaldo Quinonez in Tagaytay's 3-1 win over Davao. Panopio and Macala settled for draws. The twin wins gave Tagaytay 6.0 match points in the tournament organized by the city council headed by Mayor Laurene Cruz. Councilor Varf Belmonte and sports director Freddie Siao are also prime movers of the country's premier team tournament.

MULTITITLED driver Renan Morales (in white shirt, center) and his pit crew celebrate his double victory in the third and fourth rounds of the National Junior Touring Championship.

Morales scores double triumph at BRC

ROSARIO, Batangas—Renan Morales swept the third and fourth rounds of the National Junior Touring Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit in contrasting fashion recently. Morales began with a close victory in the NJTC, timing 32:15.073 to nip Peewee Mendiola (32:16.142) by a second. Izamel Icasas and Bingo Valera emerged third and fourth in the morning heat. The youthful driver, who participated in the Asian Formula 3, also clocked the fastest lap time in his event, timing 2:02.799 in lap 7. "I'm just trying to continue what we began last season," said Morales, who is supported by Paragon Brokerage Corporation, Lifeshine, Countryside Restaurant and Shift Racing. Morales posted a more impressive showing in the afternoon race, clocking 32:12.000 and beating Mendiola by seven seconds.

World Slasher Cup semifinals today

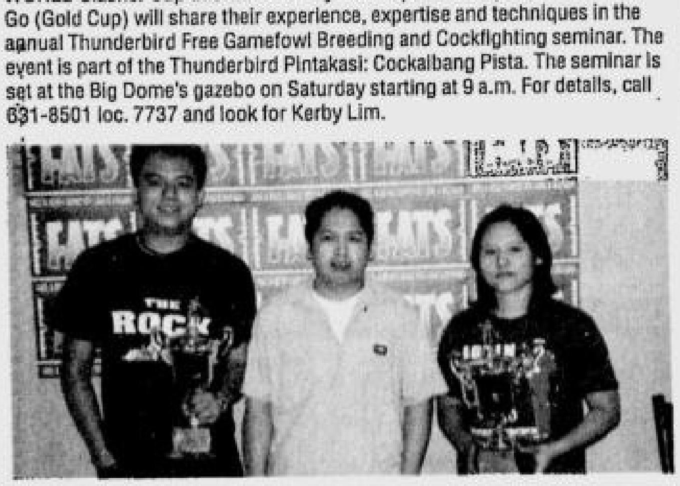
ANOTHER big crowd is expected at the air–conditioned Araneta Coliseum as the "NCA World Slasher Cup 8–Cock Championship Derby" enters it semifinal round at 5 p.m. today. Close to 10,000 aficionados witnessed the opening round Tuesday night, where 72 local and international cockers and breeders saw action. Defending champions Joseph Wolcott of Alabama and Jun Santiago were among the early qualifiers who posted two victories Tuesday night. Wolcott and Santiago again fielded their lucky entry, Joe Firefly Thunderbird 12. Also with two wins are Sonny Lagon and original Sweater man Bruce Barnette (Blue Blade Farm), Dicky Lim (Golden Circle II Winslet), hotelier Biboy Enriquez (Firebird BG) and Jun Marasigan (Intruder Concepcion BB). Being hosted by Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Jun Santiago and Gov. Ito Ynares, the cockfest is regarded as the "Olympics of cockfighting."

Roligon 6-cocker entries near 200

ROLIGON Mega Cockpit's "Hatawan Sa Tag–Ulan 6–Cock Derby," slated on July 4, 6, 8, 11 and 13, continues to draw participants from the provinces and as of yesterday the number of confirmed entries is nearing the 200 mark. Included in the latest batch of participants are Bobby Seelin, Terry Santos, engineer Felix Realeza, Boy Jalandoni, Ruel Torres, Erwin Mallari, Alex Magpantay, Danny Halili, Ricky Castillo and Raul Ebeo. Host Rolly Ligon has put up a guaranteed prize of P3 million for an entry fee of P8,800. Call, 833–2275, 833 –1638 and 852–9812.

Gamefowl Breeding and Cockfighting

WORLD Slasher Cup title-holders Boy Marzo (BM Bulalayaw) and William Go (Gold Cup) will share their experience, expertise and techniques in the annual Thunderbird Free Gamefowl Breeding and Cockfighting seminar. The event is part of the Thunderbird Pintakasi: Cockalbang Pista. The seminar is set at the Big Dome's gazebo on Saturday starting at 9 a.m. For details, call 631-8501 loc. 7737 and look for Kerby Lim.



FATS CHAMPS: Fats bar and billiards recently held its first 9-ball tournament with Ronald Salvador (left) and Jarg Maldonado (right) emerging as men's and ladies' titlists. With them is Fats manager Romulo Lopez. Fats, located on Mabini Street, Malate, will hold a tourney for club members on July 2.

MALARAYAT TILT

Garcia leads Senior Am

By Musong Castillo

LIPA CITY—Richie Garcia had an up-and-down round over a course he played for the first time yesterday, signing for an even-par 72 that was good for a three-shot lead over Rolly Viray after 18 holes of the 2005 Philippine Senior Amateurs.

The 58-year-old Garcia had five birdies and the same number of bogeys at the wind-swept Malarayat, throwing away a potential sub-par round after flubbing close birdie putts in two of his last three holes.

Garcia, the winner in 2002, took a three-shot advantage over Viray, who had a 40-35 card marred by a double bogey 6 on the ninth.

He also led joint third placers Rodolfo San Luis and Iggy Clavecilla by four and defending champion Francis Gaston and Caloy Coscoluella, another former winner, by five.

"It worked to my advantage, playing here for the first time," said Garcia, whose re-appointment to the Philippine Sports Commission prevented him from even getting a practice round off. "Not knowing the course made me not think long and hard about my shots. I just played it fairways and greens and it paid off."

Gaston opened up with a 41 and rescued his round with an eagle 3 on the finishing hole, a short par-5 where he needed just a 6-iron to land his second shot to within inches of the hole.

"It's just nice to watch us play, because the old guards have come together again," Gaston said. "I just want to have a good time with my buddies out there."

NGAP vice president Danny Pizarro shot a 78 for solo seventh spot, one ahead of Jose Nepomuceno with Danilo Olanosa and Ben Reyes rounding out the top 10 after identical 80s.

The tournament is being presented by ICTSI and San Miguel Corp. and backed by Aboitiz, Hanjin Group, Petron Blaze, Pagcor, PCSO, Philippine Airlines, the DOT and The Inns at the Malarayat.

Playing to a handicap of five, Ben Licilican turned in a net 66 to lead Category II (60-64), while Chris Gabriel had a gross 83 and a net 70 for the Category III (65-69) lead.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos shot 105 for a net 83 to trail Super Senior II (75 and above) leader Jun Inigo by six. Pat Herron of Intramuros carded a net 69 for the Super Senior (70-74) lead.

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FVR hits the ceremonial drive to open the 2005 Philippine Senior Amateur championships. NGA president Benny Gopez, vice president Danny Pizarro and secretary general Luisito Fernandez and Malarayat's Mike Carr and Kati Katigbak look on.

Southwoods, Wack Wack share top

Standings (Win-Draw-Loss)

JW Blue: Orchard 1-1-0, Forest Hills 1-1-0, Canlubang 0-2-0, Eastridge 0-1-0, Mimosa 0-1-2; JW Gold: Southwoods 2-1-0, Alabang 1-2-0, , Northwoods 1-1-0, Highlands 0-0-2, Sherwood Hills 0-0-2; JW Green: Wack Wack 2-0-0, Manila Golf 1-1-0, Valley 1-1-0, Sta. Elena 1-0-2, Riviera 0-0-2

MANILA Southwoods added to the woes of skidding Tagaytay Highlands with a 3.5-.5 romp and grabbed the solo lead in the Johnnie Walker Gold group even as Alabang held reigning champion Royal Northwoods to a draw in the 2005 Johnnie Walker Federation Golf League matches over the weekend.

Benjie Sarmiento-Marty Ilagan (high-low), Butch Brodett-Theodore Pascual (alternate shot) and Indren Naidoo-Ken Onda (aggregate) finished off their opponents early while Gene Bondoc-Romy Vergara salvaged a draw in the scramble to give Southwoods its second win and the extra point made it the new leader in the tough Johnnie Walker Gold division.

Erstwhile leader Alabang, which blanked Tagaytay (4-0) in its opening match, slipped to second just a point behind Southwoods but not after a gritty stand against Northwoods in a drawn battle which saw all four matches reach the last two holes.

Alabang's Caloy Coscolluela and Jose Cervantes first shocked Rodel Mangulabnan and last year's MVP Richard Joson in high-low before Northwoods equalized through Boy Unson-Jun Fontanilla in the alternate shots.

Alabang seemed headed for a win when Sengyo Kato-Seve Roxas Chua took the aggregate but Iggy Clavecilla-Rolly Castro lost on the last hole to Kim Chang Hoi and Tony Pancho.

Overshadowed by the two matches was Wack Wack's 3-1 conquest of Valley which was the Mandaluyong club's second straight in the Johnnie Walker Green group of the event also supported by the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. and organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc.

Also in the same group, Sta. Elena ended a two-game losing streak by beating Riviera, 3-1.

Down-the-wire matches also punctuated the Wack Wack victory with Mike Ozaeta-Takanobu Taira, Ernesto Lim-Elphege Wong and Benson Lim-John Gobing all winning their respective matches on the final hole.

The two matches in the Johnnie Walker Blue division both ended in draws. Forest Hills banked on the duo of Raffy Garcia and Eding Hizon to win the scramble and save a tie with Orchard. Both teams remain tied for the lead after winning the opening games.

Shocks XT up

SHOCKS XT waylaid guest team La Loma Trogs, 120-81, recently to gain the last quarterfinals berth in the 4th Burlington Friendship Cup at the Phil Buddhacare Academy in Quezon City.

The victory gave Shocks XT, coached by Vic Milanes, Rene Umadhay and Ed Mejia, the right to face defending champion GNC in the quarterfinals next Sunday at 9 a.m.

The socks-makers actually tied for the sixth slot with Monica Publishing, which lost to GNC, 61-78, but gained the slot because of a better quotient.

Shocks XT relied on the hot hands of Junrey Cortel and Richard Garcia to win over the PingPing Lechon-supported Trogs. Cortel scored 35 points and Garcia tallied 28 markers for the Socks-Kings.

Wilcon Builders and Phil Star finished the eliminations phase with immaculate slates to qualify outright for the semis. Wilcon upended PRC Couriers of Alex Wang, 97-81, and Star repulsed LA Gear of Thomas Ong, 102-80.

Liking Lina

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I MUST admit I was among those surprised when I read in the papers that the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) had held its election.

Was it a snap election? Meaning, the election was not actually in the BAP calendar this year in that it was held in answer to the call of the times?

And what was the call of the times again?

That the BAP needs a radical transformation amid its suspension by the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC), an unprecedented development that smacked of the BAP's lack of proper guidance from a leadership that has been moribund for years?

Was the election part of the cleansing process, mainly to exorcise the demons barnacled to the BAP trusses for so long now?

If you ask me, the election manufactured more questions than answers.

Was it legal? By legal, I mean did the process follow constitutional procedures?

Were rules followed to the letter? Meaning, was it in the BAP's by-laws that elections be held anytime?

Have the directors in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao properly informed about it? How sure are we that this election wasn't held under the mere whims and caprices of BAP officials?

From the looks of it, Joey Lina was installed BAP president in an incredibly quick manner. If this were the Gunfight at OK Coral again, Joey Lina would be the fastest gun alive.

But has he not been hoodwinked into it? I mean, was hocus-pocus employed to lure him to accept the job?

I must not assume Joey Lina accepted it for the sheer glory of having that position. Joey Lina has never been, will never be, like that. He'd rather be a foot soldier than the commanding officer. I've known him for so long that if there's a more upright person than Joey Lina, that person must be Pope John Paul II no less.

Now, if someone had pulled a fast one on him, he'd regret it for the rest of his life.

I know Joey Lina to be a man of reason. Liking Lina is the easiest thing to do. Erudite and cerebral, Joey Lina isn't the knee-jerk type. He looks before he leaps.

But in this world, every person is entitled to two major mistakes, the reason being that we are humans. And as humans, we are never perfect.

Could it be that by accepting the post as BAP president—on a silver platter, I must say—Joey Lina had just committed the first major mistake of his life?

Did it ever occur to Joey Lina that the BAP now sits precariously on the edge?

Yes, Lito Puyat was right. What the BAP had done in holding an election was in utter defiance of the POC general assembly's suspension of the BAP.

Instead of appealing the suspension, election was BAP's answer.

Look, after the suspension, the so-called sword of Damocles hangs over its head and, in a few days, the POC general assembly might yet expel the BAP from the Olympic movement. That could happen on July 6, when the 38 NSA heads who voted for BAP's suspension would make true their threat to expel the BAP.

If that should happen, where will the BAP be headed to? Purgatory?

Instead of appealing the suspension, the BAP, with Joey Lina at the helm, stands defiant and holds a tournament in Dumaguete City. The man in whose honor the event is being held, Fiba president Dr. Carl Mengky Ching, has refused to allow his name to be used. Just right. Fiba has supported POC's suspension of BAP.

Instead of making amends with the POC, the BAP loaded up its gun, ready to fire back. That sucks.

Joey Lina's now at the barrel of a gun that can't really fire but can backfire anytime.

I hate to say this but, Joey Lina could be treading on dangerous grounds.

The line of a song goes like this: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

I know Joey Lina ain't no fool but with the way things are shaping up, I'm not too sure anymore.

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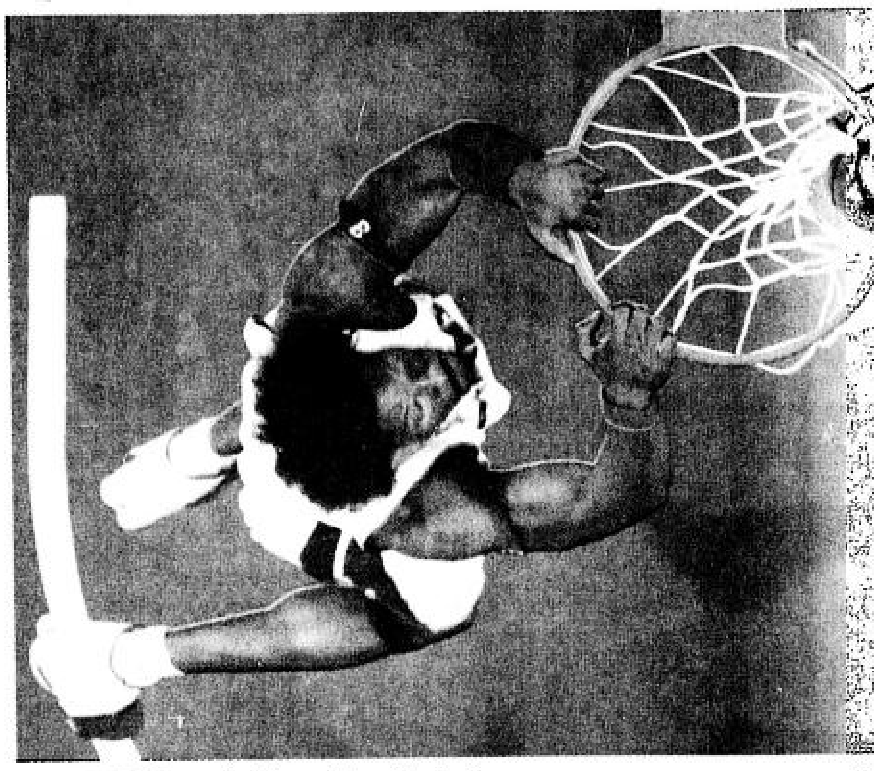
Pistons bring down Spurs

Defending champs make it 2-1 with Game 3 rout



BEN WALLACE caps the Pistons' win with a dunk. REUTERS

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan—Playing with a furious vigor that was nowhere to be found in San Antonio, Ben Wallace and Richard Hamilton led the way Tuesday as the defending champion Detroit Pistons dominated the final 14 minutes and defeated the Spurs 96-79 in Game 3.

Television ratings have been down and interest has been low, but the best-of-seven series suddenly looks much more competitive and a little more compelling.

"I think we figured out how hard we have to play," coach Larry Brown said.

No longer is there a chance for a sweep, and never again will anyone question whether the Pistons can even play with the likes of Manu Ginobili, Tim Duncan and Co.

Ginobili, who got hurt in the game's first 30 seconds, was a nonfactor for the first time in the series, and Duncan could not match the energy or enthusiasm generated by Wallace, the Pistons' Defensive Player of the year. Wallace's dunk with 4:27 left gave Detroit a 15-point lead at 88-73 and the Pistons held on easily from there.

Now, the Pistons will look to even the series at 2-2 in Game 4 on Thursday and ensure a trip back to Texas.

Hamilton scored 24 points, including 10 in the third quarter when Detroit took the lead for good, and Chauncey Billups added 20. But although the Pistons got most of their points from their backcourt tandem once again, they were anything but a two-man team.

Wallace had 15 points, 11 rebounds, five blocks and three steals.

Detroit became the first team to score 90 points against the Spurs in 13 NBA Finals games, putting together the type of poised, pumped-up performance they hadn't displayed since Game 7 of the Eastern Conference finals at Miami.

Detroit had lost by 15 and 21 points in the first two games of the series. *AP*

Phil's still the man for Lakers

LOS ANGELES—Phil Jackson is returning to the Los Angeles Lakers following a reconciliation with the team that cut him loose last year after three NBA championships in five seasons.

The Lakers rehired Jackson Tuesday, after he was let go by team owner Jerry Buss last June.

"This is something I never thought could possibly happen," Jackson said. "It's a pleasure to come back."

Jackson, who turns 60 in September, has had health issues in the past and underwent an angioplasty two years ago. He told an American television station before the opening game of the NBA Finals that he underwent a series of tests to make sure he was healthy.

Jackson agreed to a three-year contract. Terms were not announced, but it's believed he'll be earning between $7 million and $10 million per year, which would make him the highest-paid NBA coach ever.

Jackson's dismissal a year ago set in motion a makeover of massive proportions that proved to be disastrous.

Dominant big man Shaquille O'Neal demanded a trade and was shipped to Miami, while superstar Kobe Bryant opted out of his contract to become a free agent the same day Jackson's five-year run as coach ended. *AP*

Tyson finally finds his serenity

WASHINGTON—From street punk in the projects to world heavyweight champion, Mike Tyson's life has revolved around violence.

That is why it was bizarre to see Tyson's boxing career come to an end so peacefully, as he sat quietly on a stool in his corner while journeyman Kevin McBride paraded around the ring.

Tyson, 38, disgraced himself with his performance on Saturday at the MCI Center but he appeared unmoved. He just sat there, towel draped over his shoulder. No scowls, no emotion.

"When he sat on that stool, he exhaled," said Rock Newman, former manager for champion Riddick Bowe. "The weight of the world was lifted off his shoulders.

"I'd be surprised if he ever leaves that serenity. He'd have to live up to those expectations again."

Tyson retired immediately after the McBride debacle. Boxing writer Bert Sugar said the unheralded Irishman had little to do with Tyson quitting after the sixth round.

"Mike Tyson was beaten by Mike Tyson," said Sugar, recently inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. "There's nothing left inside. He's a classic 'Would have, could have, should have'."

Michael Gerard Tyson has been trying to live up to lofty expectations ever since he put on a pair of boxing gloves as a youth in the Brooklyn, New York, slum of Brownsville.

Famed trainer Cus D'Amato saw a troubled boy—arrested at age 12 for purse snatching—in a reform school and became a father figure to him. He figured boxing would keep Tyson's life from spiraling out of control.

D'Amato, who had managed Floyd Patterson to the top decades earlier, died before Tyson's ascent through the ranks. Tyson lost his confidant, his stability and his way.

He did not, however, lose his powerful punch. Though D'Amato died shortly after his protege's 1985 professional debut, Tyson won his first 19 fights by knockout.

None of those lasted more than six rounds. In fact, 12 of those fights ended in the first round.

By the age of 20, Tyson became the youngest champion of all time when he pummeled Trevor Berbick during a second-round knockout.

Tyson won his first 37 fights but his out-of-the-ring life had become golden fodder for the tabloids. Street brawls, drug use and accusations of wife-beating provided just some of the headlines.

"The demons," said Sugar. "He couldn't escape the demons.

"He'd become a lounge act. He was the Michael Jackson of boxing." *Reuters*

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POWERBOWL
The PowerBowl Youth Team members dominated the classified division of the recent 3rd DATBI-CSI FFW Invitational Open Championships in Dagupan City include (clockwise from left): Adrian Saguinsin, Kenneth Chua, John Racho, Angelo Carandang, Nico Valderrama, Liza Vicente, Madelline Llamas and Kia Enriquez.

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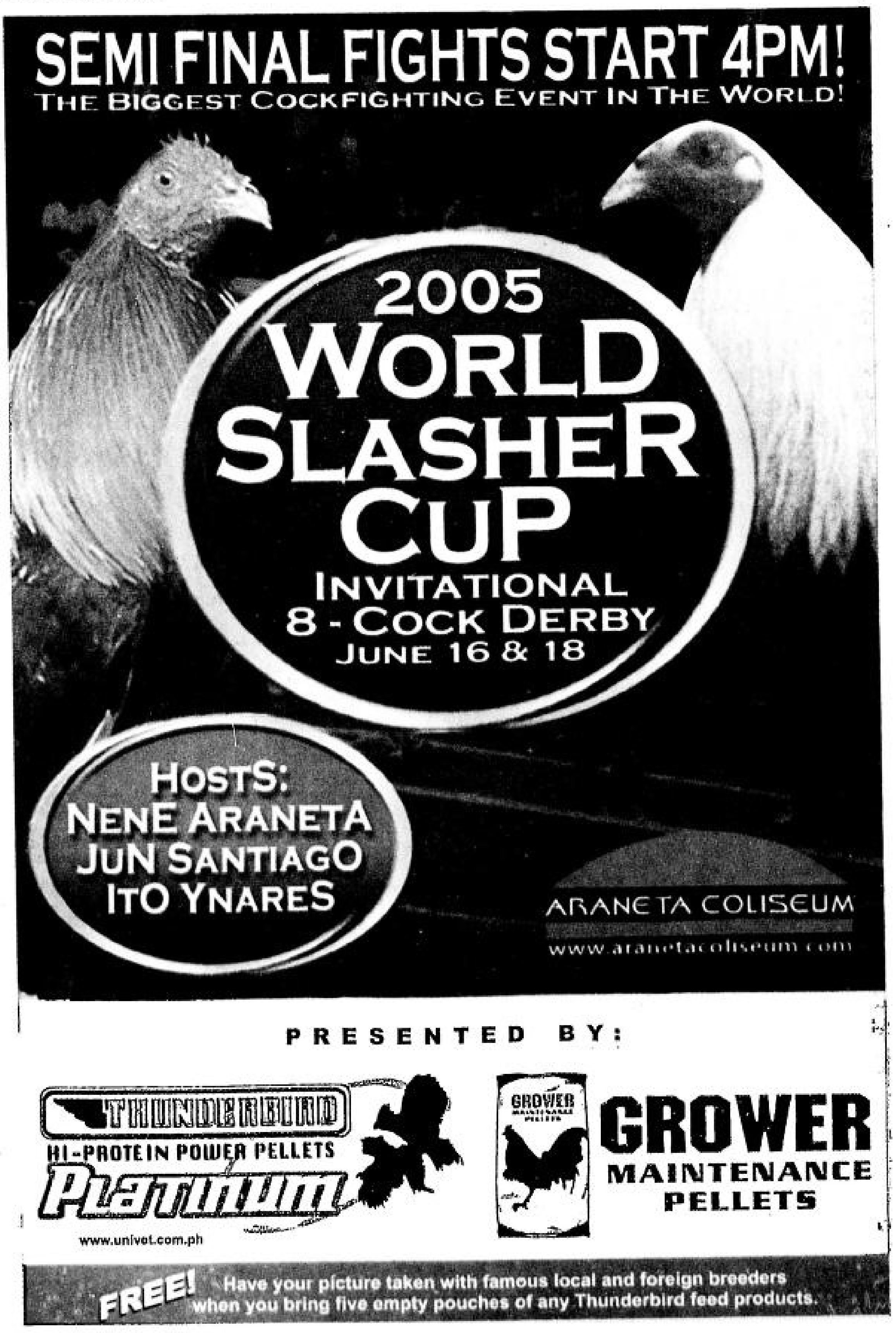

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Thanks for the memories

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

MOVIE stars of the 1940s and '50s are trooping to the LVN Studios on P. Tuazon in Quezon City, to retrieve vintage photographs and have their classic movies copied on VHS tapes.

Recently, respected industry pioneers Lilia Dizon, Armando Goyena, and Delia Razon visited their old home studio, whose film processing facilities cease operations on June 30.

Razon ordered stills, as well as tapes of "Prinsipe Teñoso," "Doce Pares," and "Lapulapu."

Razon is pretty organized—her collection of photos is neatly stored in heavy-duty plastic albums and labeled according to film. She has also indicated co-stars' and directors' names, and the years the movies were released.

"I've collected these stills through the years," she tells Inquirer Entertainment. "On the first page of every album, I always put a portrait of Doña Sisang [Narcisa de Leon, LVN matriarch and founder]."

Razon says former colleagues who have secured such precious souvenirs include Lorna Mirasol, Oscar Obligacion, Luz Valdez, Caridad Sanchez.

Christopher's mom

Dizon got tapes of two of her films—1948's "Kaaway ng Babae" and 1951's "Haring Kobra"—and stills from "Kandilerong Pilak," "Tucy Dides," "Doce Pares," and "Magkumpareng Putik."

She ordered three copies of a still photo from "Philippine Navy, "which topbilled Goyena, Carlos Salazar, and her late husband Gil de Leon.

"I'm going to give a copy each to my children Pinky, Christopher, and Melissa," she says.

Dizon is not content with her haul and is planning to return for more. "I am looking for 'Bathaluman,'" she says.

In a previous interview, Rosa Rosal expressed concern about the fate of LVN's extensive catalogue of films and priceless collection of photographs and other memorabilia.

"What are their plans for the LVN museum?" Rosal wondered.

Her question is echoed throughout the industry.

"We really don't know," Razon says. "I've been asking around, but no one knows."

"The late Bernard Fernandez was in charge of the museum," another LVN alumni, Caridad Sanchez, volunteers. "He took good care of all the memorabilia. The museum should be maintained in honor of his memory."

Razon and Dizon have expressed sadness over the sorry state of film preservation in the country.

"My dramatic highlight in 'Luksang Tagumpay' disappeared," Razon sighs.

She recalls that, in the '70s, when GMA 7, then owned by Bob Stewart, borrowed LVN classics, the films were cut up to accommodate commercials. The excised scenes were never restored.

DELIA Razon has kept this photo of hers with Nestor de Villa in LVN's "1,2,3"

ROGER CARPIO

Melted for silver?

Another story often repeated in industry circles is how certain masterpieces were melted to get the silver in the old film stock. "I don't know how much that silver was, but they would probably be making more money [now] if they preserved those films instead," says Dizon, who starred in De Leon's "Sanda Wong."

If only they knew what was coming, Dizon and Razon say, they would have moved heaven and earth to protect their old movies.

"I did three movies for Tamaraw, an independent production company, and I know that it sold its movies to Hong Kong," Dizon says. "I hope there are copies of those somewhere in China."

Which is not far-fetched since, recently, a print of the original "Darna," with Rosa del Rosario, surfaced in Thailand.

Former superstars race to preserve the past against all odds

Next stop for Razon and Dizon is the Tropicana photo studio in Malabon.

"I was told by my son Christopher that Tropicana had an exhibit at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and my glamour portraits were displayed," Dizon relates. "I remember Tropicana had this huge picture of me and it was displayed in a theater lobby."

"It was bigger than life-size and it was from 'Ikaw ang Buhay Ko,'" Razon points out. "I remember it distinctly; she was in a black sequined dress."

Dizon is surprised by Razon's sharp memory.

"What we hear, we store in a filing cabinet in our brain," Razon insists.

Because in the end, she and Dizon agree, "All we have are our memories."

Alicia Silverstone is totally married!

NEW YORK—Alicia Silverstone is, like, totally married.

The 28-year-old "Clueless" star wed longtime boyfriend Christopher Jarecki at Lake Tahoe on Saturday, said Silverstone's publicist, Elizabeth Much, confirming a report in People magazine.

It's the first marriage for both. Jarecki is lead singer of the band STUN. The pair have been together eight years.

The wedding was held for 135 friends and family at a private lakeside estate. The couple exchanged vows while barefoot on the beach, People reported Monday. *AP*

OPENS JUNE 22
Sophie Okonedo and Don Cheadle star in "Hotel Rwanda," hailed as the most remarkable film of its kind since "Schindler's List." Cheadle stars hotelier Paul Rusesabagina, who became a modern-day hero during the Rwandan conflict of 1994. Opens in local theaters next week.

Laguardia resists new . . .

From page A30

And three, that the work "lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value."

Laguardia stressed that the criteria were "subjective."

Worse, she said, the bill asks that all three conditions be present. "In that case, *wala nang 'X.'*"

The MTRCB also protested the proposed reduction of the size of its managing board from 30 members to eight.

"There is also no clear explanation as to how the MTRCB would get enough people to review and classify films," Laguardia said.

The draft bill does not provide slots for members representing the academe, civic groups and volunteer sectors, including mothers. The pending measure requires members to come from such organizations as the Cultural Center of the Philippines, UP Film Institute, Kapisanan ng mga Broadkaster ng Pilipinas and the Director's Guild of the Philippines Inc.

On June 6, Laguardia was invited by Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla to a House deliberation on the reorganization of the MTRCB.

"We are not in favor of this bill," the censors chief insisted. "We'll do everything we can—anything—to convince our lawmakers to reconsider."

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Does Tita Annabelle approve of Richard's pretty girlfriend?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I REMEMBER **Richard Gutierrez** as a bubbly little boy endorsing a milk brand. He was a regular guest in the kiddie show that I used to host. His ever-*glamorosa* mom, Tita **Annabelle Rama**, also brought him to all our children's parties at home since our moms were like fairy godsisters.

How he's grown! And so has his name. After soaring high in "Mulawin," Richard is all buffed up to play "Sugo," soon on GMA 7.

I caught Richard and his non-show biz girlfriend in an unguarded moment during the taping of NUTS. They were nestled in a cozy corner oblivious of the people around them. She was sitting on his lap, legs wrapped around his waist, while he gently caressed her face. They even had a video cam to record the moment. All of Richard's romantic scenes in past movies would pale in comparison.

His girlfriend looks like a commercial model (she's overqualified to be one). She's tall, *mestiza* and stunning. Heard she's brainy, too! Although it might break the hearts of Richard's die-hard fans to know that he's taken, it could also be better for him in the long run. Since he has a girlfriend, he need not be trapped in the love team syndrome—which will give him a better chance to shine on his own as a serious actor. Besides, fans these days have become wiser. They no longer fall for contrived love team scenarios.

The question is … does Tita Annabelle approve of this match? She has always guarded her children like a hawk. (Or has the Mulawin in Richard overpowered her? Just asking…) Mother knows best, or mother NOs best?!

Enough already!

THE ON again-off again love story of **Jennylyn Mercado** and **Mark Herras** is not cute anymore. The unpredictability of their emotions has become predictable in their interviews. It's downright annoying already! One day, Jen says everything is going well, and the next day she eats her words and says they have cooled off. She even has the audacity to frown on nationwide TV while seated beside Mark, just because they are having yet another lovers' quarrel. When she's asked about it, she shrugs and says nothing's wrong. She's too transparent for her own good. Mark, on the other hand, seems to be enjoying all the attention. He feels like he's God's gift to women, being linked to Jen and other pretty young things. Their home studio should stop milking the issue, and instead send the two "Starstruck" survivors to a crash course in Love 101. Mark … Jen … Jen … Mark … ad nauseum.

Juday-Piolo still works

HEARD that a new ABS-CBN soap is now in the works for **Judy Ann Santos** and **Piolo Pascual**. Even if Juday and **Ryan Agoncillo** are already open about their special friendship, her team-up with Piolo still has that "kilig" factor somehow. Piolo remains to be a "Crush ng Bayan." Piolo reportedly portrays a blind man in the new soap. Will the story echo the age-old cliché that "love is blind?"

Abnormal ratings

ABS-CBN has launched new prime time programs to regain ratings supremacy. Although they have not succeeded so far, their new programs have been registering well, thanks to the continuous abnormal cable ratings that their shows are apparently generating.

Data from AGB Philippines for June 6 and 7 show that a number of ABS-CBN programs posted cable ratings higher than non-cable ratings. This is very unusual, considering the fact that cable TV offers more channel options for viewers, thereby limiting the chances of viewers tuning in to local free TV channels like GMA and ABS-CBN. This peculiar ratings behavior naturally pulled up ABS-CBN's ranking.

For example, overnight ratings last June 7 showed ABS-CBN's primetime program "Qpids" getting a rating of 17.7 points among cable homes, 4.1 points higher than its rating of 13.6 points among non-cable homes. On the other hand, "Full House," the rival program over GMA got only 9.1 points among cable homes against 20.3 rating points among non-cable homes.

Other ABS-CBN programs that posted higher cable ratings in the said dates include "Meteor Garden: The Full Edition," "Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin," "Insider," "Most Requested Show," "Pilipinas Game KNB?" "Showbiz No. 1," and "TV Patrol World." Their counterpart programs over GMA consistently showed much lower cable TV ratings against non-cable TV ratings.

Even their new prime time series, "Kampanerang Kuba," registered cable ratings abnormally close to non-cable ratings on its first two days of airing from June 6 to 7.

It has been more than two years since ABS-CBN's abnormal cable ratings were first noticed, but AGB Philippines, the official ratings supplier in the industry, still has not issued a satisfactory explanation.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)

Enough of the Mark and Jen breakup!

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① BATMAN BEGINS
MTRCB GP
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

② MR.& MRS.SMITH
MTRCB PG-13
11 10, 1 50, 4 30, 7 10, 9:50

③ NASAAN KA MAN
MTRCB: R-13

④ COACH CARTER
MTRCB: PG-13
11:40,2:30,5:20,8:10,10:00

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3	BATMAN BEGINS	10:20, 1:25, 4:30 7:35, 10:40 GP
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NASAAN KA MAN R13 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00	MR. AND MRS. SMITH PG13 1:40,4:20,7.00,9:40	BATMAN BEGINS GP 11:35,2:20,5:05,7:50,10:35

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GP
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2 MR. & MRS. SMITH
11 15FS/11 40MF/02 08/04 20/06 40 08 40LFS/09 00LMF/11 00END

megamall 633-1901
SIN CITY
11:30FS/12:00MF/02:25/04:50/07:17 09:15LFS/09:40LMF/11:40END

cebu (032) 231-3876
1 STARWARS: EPIOSDE III
11 20FS/11 30MF/02 09/04 30/07 00 09 20LFS/09 30LMF/11 50END
2 BATMAN BEGINS
10 40FS/10 50MF/01 30/04 10/06 50 09 15LFS/09 30LMF/11 55END
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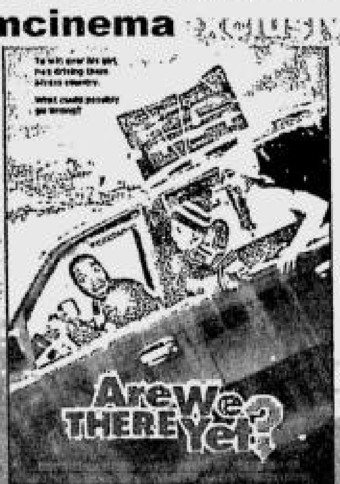
11 40FS/11 50MF/02 15/04 40/07 05 09 05LFS/09 30LMF/11 59END



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12 MADAGASCAR

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5 A LOT LIKE LOVE
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4 NASAAN KA MAN

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2 SHUTTER
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4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 BATMAN BEGINS	2 BATMAN BEGINS	3 THX BATMAN BEGINS 11:15, 2:15, 5:15, 8:15, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SHUTTER	5 A LOT LIKE LOVE	6 NASAAN KA MAN	7 MR. & MRS. SMITH
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 FRENCH SPRING FILM FESTIVAL	2 BATMAN BEGINS 12:10, 3:10, 6:10, 9:10		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX BATMAN BEGINS 11:10, 2:10, 5:10, 8:10, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX BATMAN BEGINS 1:35, 4:35, 10:35 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 BATMAN BEGINS 11 50, 2.50, 5 50, 8 50, 11 50 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 NASAAN KA MAN GUARANTEED SEATS	5 MR. & MRS. SMITH GUARANTEED SEATS	
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Brangelina starrer wings it on stellar sizzle

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

DISCUSSING "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" with colleagues yesterday, we summed up our reaction to the **Brad Pitt-Angelia Jolie** starrer this way: *"Walang kuwento, pero hindi walang kuwenta."* To elucidate:

The film's ability to sustain viewers' attention, not to mention empathy, is severely limited by its flimsy plot development. Basically, it consists of making a pair of assassins (Pitt and Jolie) getting married not out of true love, but to give each other a humdrum "cover" for their lethal activities.

Quite incredibly, each doesn't know that the other is a hired killer for a rival "agency"—so much for being top operatives!

In any case, six years into their marriage, the Smiths are doing very well financially, but they are bored to tears with each other. It turns out that the only element that can re-ignite their marital passion is the discovery that their next assignment is to assassinate each other!

That *is* a novel plot twist, but it peters out soon after it's introduced. What really drives the movie are its slam-bang action sequences, and the two leads' screen chemistry, which is a real turn-on.

Due to the vitality of these two plus factors, "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" is definitely *hindi walang kuwenta.* Its action quotient is often roguishly tongue-in-cheek, with our two heroes killing off entire platoons of foes and getting out of harm's way much too easily.

And the stars' chemistry enables them to go in for a wide range of entertaining approaches, from witty flirtation *a la* "Moonlighting," to intensely passionate clinches.

Pitt and Jolie aren't only good-looking, they know how to heat up the screen when needed, and they cheerfully put that ability to good use here.

So, even if the storytelling falters early in the movie, we remain interested due to these plus factors. Also appealing is the film's secondary focus on secrets in a marriage, and how they rob marital unions of the all-important element of trust.

So, even if the movie intends to do little more than entertain viewers in a breezy way, it offers some insights into marriage for real-life spouses to think about.

They may not be top assassins masquerading as the humdrum Smiths, but they can occasionally relate to this film's embattled and battling leads.

Movies on TV

ON HBO today at 5:30 p.m., "Biloxi Blues." 7:15 p.m., "Anger Management." Tomorrow at 8:15 a.m., "Lady Jane." 2 p.m., "21 Grams." 7 p.m., "The Big Preview: Batman Begins." 9 p.m., "Tears of the Sun."

On Cinemax today at 8:15 a.m., "Owning Mahoney." 10:15 a.m., "Heroes and the Amazon Women." Tomorrow at 6 a.m., "Clockers." 5:30 p.m., "True Colors." 1:15 a.m., "The People vs Larry Flynt."

'Fete de la Musique'

THE ANNUAL music festival, "Fete de la Musique," unreels June 18, 3 p.m. to 4 a.m. at El Pueblo and The Podium at Ortigas Center. Some 145 acts will perform on eight stages.

Pianist **Butch Saulog**'s jazz/blues ensemble Bluesviminda kicks off the evening, with **Cookie Chua** on vocals. Blues goes hot and electric with bands like D.C. Aftershock, Freeway Jam, Huka and Mr. Crayon. Also playing are Taglaysinag and The Jerks.

Bo Razon leads an all-star group specializing in Afro-Latin grooves. Singer-pianist **Isha** leads a trio performing piano-based pop. **Mishka Adams** performs with her band, Blue Echoes. Affinity features **Johnny Alegre**, and jazz-rap fusion ensemble Mother Earth regroups for the Fete.

Skarlet and Friends features **Myra Ruaro** tackling jazz standards. Young jazz groups Quail Quintet, Sound and Subconcept lead the way to the future of Pinoy jazz.

E-mail: fetemanila2005@gmail.com

What matters most . . .

From page A30

everybody. I figured it would be best to just quit. Whatever I learned about marketing in the long run, I learned on my own."

Not all that easy

But it wasn't all that easy. During a dark spell in his life, shortly after he found out that his girlfriend at the time, Janice de Belen, was pregnant; Aga left home and lived with friend Willie Revillame, then just a drummer for a jazz band.

"Willie paid the rent for about six months because I was out of work," Aga recalled. "We had no air con. He would always remind me not to waste toothpaste."

Again he said, "Peole have short memories. What they know about me now is only from the last five years. They [seem to] have forgotten that I worked—hard. Whatever I have now, my family, my life, I worked for everything."

Although he was the endorser for a string of products, from ice cream to burgers to film stock, Aga said, "I'm not a role model, really I'm not. Being a product endorser has helped shape my life. If I get to inspire only ten people in this lifetime, that would be enough for me."

Acting was still his bread and butter, he said. And in a shaky entertainment industry, Aga's career has remained steady. He has a regular sitcom, "OK Fine! 'To ang Gusto Nyo!," and makes at least one movie a year. This year, the movie will be with Claudine Barretto, in a tale about overseas Filipino workers in Dubai.

The sitcom has run for three years now, and the introduction into the plot of a love interest for Michael (Aga's character), to be played by Mariel Rodriguez, is expected to give the show an even longer run.

What else is there?

He was making no long-term plans, Aga said, "because ten years from now, who knows if we still have an industry?" Of course there are a few more movies he knows he wants to do—for instance, one with Maricel Soriano—and for sure he wouldn't mind doing whatever good roles still come his way.

Even so, he said, when he died, he'd only want to be remembered by his wife as a good man. "There's nothing more that I want."

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BATMAN BEGINS

What matters most to Aga Muhlach

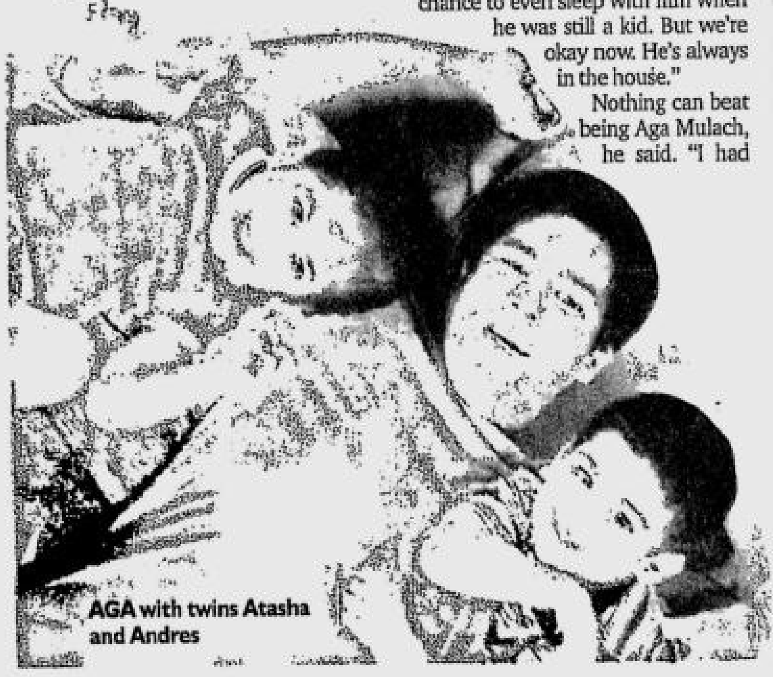
Marriage, family, and to be remembered as a good man

By Nini Valera

A REAL man, according to Aga Muhlach, is someone who can keep his marriage.

"That's very hard to do," Aga told Inquirer Entertainment last Monday. "If you can, then you're really successful. Then you're a real man. If you can't, you're not a real man. *Dahil tarantado ka, nambababae ka* (You're a punk and a womanizer). If you stay married, your wife will be with you when you're old."

Aga, 35, married Charlene Gonzales in 2003. They have two children—a pair of twins—Andres and Atasha. Aga has a son, Iggy Boy, with Janice de Belen. Iggy is now 18.



AGA with twins Atasha and Andres

Nothing beats...

"I can't be a 'chick boy'," the actor insisted. "I won't risk my family; no way. This is what I've always dreamed off—having a family, kids."

He claimed he was a hands-on father, though not with Iggy Boy, who did not grow up with him.

Aga lamented, "I never had the chance to even sleep with him when he was still a kid. But we're okay now. He's always in the house."

Nothing can beat being Aga Mulach, he said. "I had the best life when I was single. Nothing comes close to what I experienced."

Whenever he had a girlfriend back then, he recalled, all his friends would think she was the one. But each time, he would realize he wasn't prepared to settle down. "Let's face it," he said. "Men are polygamous; they're always looking. But you also learn from your experiences. That's what happened to me."

Things have changed. Now, Aga said, he would always walk away from ... "temptation" was how he put it. "I don't [look], even if it's in front of me. I don't have a night life. No [more] bars. If I want to go out, I go out with my wife. Swear to God and hope to die, I prefer staying home, with my wife and kids, to going out. That's how it's supposed to be."

"I enjoy being a family man. [Although] if I make a movie, I also want to enjoy making that movie. My family is my priority now, not my work. *Masaya na ako sa buhay ko, sa tatay ko* (I'm now happy with my life, my father), my sister, my brother, my wife, my in-laws, my kids, Janice. *Okay na 'yon.* Whatever intrigues people want to create about me, that's okay, too."

College dropout

A college dropout from San Beda, Aga took up Marketing and would have finished the course, had work not come first.

"I didn't want to [have to] finish college just for the sake of finishing college," he explained. "My classmates had to do that before they could work, but I was already working. People forget that I started working at 14. In school, I got to hang out at the principal's office. My work was an equalizer; I was equal to

WHAT MATTERS/ A29

OPERATION: MEMORIES
Yesteryears superstars Delia Razon and Lilia Dizon are happy that a visit on Tuesday to their old home studio, LVN Pictures, yielded positive results—reproductions of vintage photographs and VHS copies of their early movies. LVN ceases operations as a film processing facility at the end of the month. *Story on page 26.*

ROGER CARPIO

Laguardia resists new censors bill

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MOVIE and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) is opposing a pending bill in the House of Representatives that seeks to allow the exhibition of "R-18" or "For Adults Only" films on free and cable television.

In a position paper sent to the Lower House last week, MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia protested the draft bill, pointing out that "R-18" films, "contain adult materials, vulgar or profane language, considerable sex and violence [and] sexually oriented nudity."

Laguardia said the draft bill also aimed to repeal Presidential Decree 1986 and would make classification "too liberal."

Unacceptable

PD 1986 created the MTRCB and its implementing rules and regulations; the pending bill seeks to reorganize the Board.

In her position paper, Laguardia raised five points that the MTRCB found unacceptable.

She said the bill's standards, as contained in its "R (Strictly for Adults)" and "NC-13 (No Children Below 13 Years Old)" classifications were "too lenient."

She pointed out that films classified under "NC-13" had "violence, nudity and sensuality" in their themes, and that "R" films contained "considerable sex and violence, sexually oriented nudity, liberal aberrational behavior or substance use or a combination thereof."

Too difficult

Laguardia's position paper also noted that the pending bill made it "too difficult" to determine obscenity since it endorsed the Miller Doctrine as a measure.

The Miller Doctrine, which the Motion Picture Association of America subscribes to, poses three requirements for a film to merit an "X" rating.

One, that "an average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find the work ... appealing to prurient interest and satisfying only the market for gratuitous sex and violence."

Two, that the work "depicts ... sexual conduct in a patently offensive way."

LAGUARDIA/ A26

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Thursday, June 16, 2005

Laura Jean
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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Qpids (5:35 PM)		TV Patrol World		Meteor Garden Full Edition	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Reruns)				Sentro	American Idol			The Best Of Guinness Book Of Records		Big News	Inq TV		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		All About Eve	Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	NBA On RPN					Band Of Brothers		Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Poker Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Sports Feature			TM-9 Ball		IBC News Tonite		
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Ride With Funk Master Flex	Camouflage				Cinematech	Family Guy	Mad TV		Reno 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Hip-Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Cow At The Moo-vies	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX	MYX Firsts	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	My MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX	Star MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Malvarosa				Vizconde Massacre 2		Pipe Pipe (One For You, Two For Me)				Wala Nang Iibigin Pang Iba				Anghel Sa Lupa			
Studio 23								Batman Beyond	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	Birds Of Prey	Alias		Desperate Housewives		News Central	Oprah		Chefs On The Go
AXN		Fear Factor		CSI NY (Season I)		Maximum Exposure (Season I)		The Associates		Alias (Season III)		Worst Case Scenario		Lost		The Brood			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Invasion Iowa	Growing Up Gotti	The Simple Life	Arrested Development	The Apprentice		Friends	Invasion Iowa
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Solar Sports			TV Shopping										Sports Desk	WNBA Game				Vintage NBA	
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO			Secondhand Lions (3:40 PM)				Blood Blues			Anger Management (7:15 PM)				Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle			The Devil's Own (10:45PM)		
Star Movies	Pit Fighter			Kung Phooey			Hope Floats (5:25 PM)				MXP: Most Extreme Primate (7:25 PM)			The Gathering			Visitors		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Static Shock	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans	Zoids Fuzors	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Unbelievable Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Clubhouse Detectives: Scavenger Hunt			So Little Time	Sabrina The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Dennis The Menace Cruise Control	
Cinemax		Tobruk (3:15 PM)				I'll Be Seeing You (5:15 PM)				Nothing In Common				Tough Luck			Silent Rage		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Strong Medicine					Judging Amy (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia		First Time Film Makers		Wild Discovery		Disaster At The Devil's Coast		Extreme Machines		Superstructures		Wild Weather: Wet		Extraordinary Experiences: Lost City In The Clouds		Power Zone	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Lokal: Orange & Lemons	MTV Divas		Battle for Ozzfest	One Bad Trip	Wildboyz	Cribs	On Board at MTV	MTV Urban Beats	VH1 Video Collection	
Sports Plus						Monster Jam		Raceworld		World's Greatest Auto Shows		World Poker Tour Ep 13 Road to C'ships				Nascar Pocono 500			

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Gov't defers roadshow; peso still weak

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT'S economic team has decided to postpone the international roadshow slated this month as the controversies hounding the Arroyo administration could taint the country's credit image.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the economic team still intended to push through with the roadshow although it has yet to decide on the exact date. Only the other day, the government said the roadshow would continue since foreign investors were expected "to see through the (political) noise."

The roadshow, which was originally set for one-and-half weeks starting June 21, was aimed at updating investors from Europe and the United States on the positive developments on the local fiscal front.

In particular, the economic team was hoping to inform foreign investors of the passage of key revenue-raising bills like the expanded value-added tax, and the implementation of administrative measures to improve the fiscal situation. Last April, the national government posted a budget surplus of P3.3 billion, the first time in four years.

But while investor confidence in the country was being boosted by progress on the fiscal situation, analysts said it had been slightly dragged by the current political uncertainty.

Controversies hounding the presidency have already caused the peso to tumble and the stock market to plummet. Yesterday, the peso closed at 55.28 to a dollar from 55.27 on turnover of $371.5 million at the Philippine Dealing System.

Some critics of President Macapagal-Arroyo have called for her resignation amid allegations that she cheated in last year's election and that her family was involved in "jueteng," an illegal numbers game.

"What's happening in the political scene should really be a consideration in the postponement of the roadshow. When everything tapers off, then there will be a better opportunity to sell the Philippines," said a bond trader from

GOV'T DEFERS/ B2

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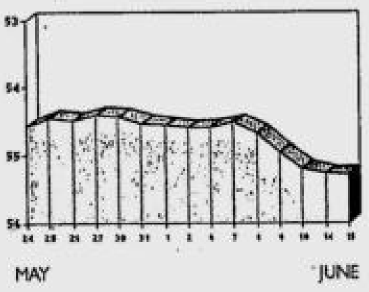
INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.28 = $

As of 5 p.m., June 15, 2005

¥ 109.16 = $ 1

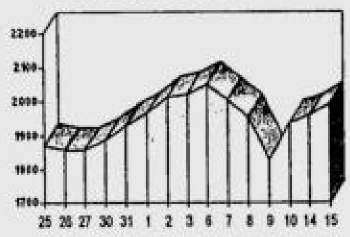
As of 5 p.m., June 15, 2005

GOLD: $426.40-426.90

per ounce Hong Kong, June 15, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks up 1.87%; PLDT leads rally

SHARE prices closed 1.87 percent higher yesterday, led by key blue-chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. after the company pointed to solid earnings growth in coming months, dealers said.

Investors focused for now on the upbeat prospects for corporate earnings and the economy in general, they said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 36.65 points to 1,992.44 after moving between 1,955.79 and 1,994.36.

Volume turnover hit 989.9 million shares worth P1.17 billion. The broader all-shares index rose 19.12 points to 1,206.63.

Gainers led losers 68 to 23, with 34 stocks unchanged.

However, dealers said investors were not yet discounting political concerns stemming from opposition charges that President Macapagal-Arroyo had cheated in the elections last year and that her family was linked to illegal gambling.

"PLDT's profit guidance is inspiring. Investors opt to focus for the meantime on (economic and corporate) fundamentals," said Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan told stockholders during Tuesday's annual meeting that the company's results for the first five months of the year indicate that profits for 2005 would exceed those of 2004.

Telecom giant PLDT was the most active, rising P45 to P1,605.

Bank of the Philippine Islands was up P1.50 at P50.50.

Ayala Land rose 20 centavos to P8.20 but shopping mall developer SM Prime Holdings was down 20 centavos at P7.80.

Both "A" and "B" shares of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. rose 50 centavos each to to P59.50 and P91 respectively.

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OFW remittances up 17.2% in 1st 4 months

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOLLARS sent home by overseas Filipino workers through banks rose by 19.1 percent in April to $790 million from a year ago.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer-in-Charge Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said the April figure brought the total migrant remittances in the first four months of the year to $3.1 billion, or 17.2 percent better than last year.

Tetangco said the steady increase in foreign exchange remittances was fueled by the double-digit growth in OFW deployment, as well as the improved efficiency and aggressive marketing of the banks' remittance services.

"The increased fund transfers to beneficiaries by overseas workers to defray school enrollment expenses also contributed to the higher level of remittances during the period," Tetangco said.

"The vigorous drive by local commercial banks to encourage overseas workers to use the formal mode of transfers—through promotional campaigns, increase in the number of remittance centers, and special arrangements with foreign financial counterparts—resulted in better capture of OFW cash remittances," he added.

The bulk of cash transfers came from the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates.

Estimates of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration on newly hired and rehired OFWs showed that the deployment of land-based workers grew by 16.6 percent in April. The number of sea-based workers deployed rose by 14.2 percent in the same month. These brought the cumulative deployment in the first four months to 344,058 or 3.8 percent higher than year-ago level.

POEA data on newly hired OFWs for the first quarter showed that service workers accounted for the bulk of 42.7 percent, followed by professional/technical workers (29.4 percent) and production workers (24.1 percent).

The BSP wants banks to tap overseas Filipino workers as a market for unit investment trust funds (UITFs), a new product promoted by the banking regulator in lieu of common trust funds (CTFs).

The BSP has ordered the phaseout of CTFs and the introduction of the UITF which, it believes, is a better product as it reflects underlying market values.

The UITFs will be handled separately by the trust departments of banks, thus avoiding any residual risks arising from misunderstandings with bank customers on the nature of their investments.

Under the new rules, the ULTFs can only be invested in liquid investments and tradable financial instruments. Tradability is premised on the existence of a readily and regularly available two-way quote.

As such, funds pooled into UITFs cannot be directly relent by the banks but could be placed in equities, bonds and high-grade commercial papers.

Republic Cement merges 2 subsidiaries

REPUBLIC Cement Corp. is consolidating its two major subsidiaries—Fortune Cement Corp. and Continental Operating Corp.—to streamline its structure, cut costs and enhance the credit rating of the surviving entity, which is Fortune Cement.

Republic Cement, one of the country's biggest cement producers, is controlled by Southeast Asia Cement Holdings and Lafarge Holdings (Philippines) Inc.

Fortune Cement, in its disclosure to the stock exchange, said that because of the merger, it would have to increase its authorized capital stock to P4.232 billion from P3.032 billion.

The merger will involve the issuance of 1.12 billion common shares of Fortune to Republic Cement in exchange for all the issued and outstanding shares of Continental.

Fortune Cement said its board had also decided to use the company's existing additional paid-in capital and the deposit for future stock subscription to wipe out its deficit of P4.95 billion as of April 30.

"The merger will simplify the company's legal structure and promote significant cost efficiency improvements such as the extension of the company's market coverage to the Northern Luzon area, complementing its already strong market position in the Southern Luzon area," said Fortune Cement in its disclosure.

Fortune and Continental are two well-established cement brands, according to the company.

"Their merger would improve efficiency such that they would only need single statutory audit and reportorial requirements and provide savings on the use of substantial spare equipment and machinery," it added.

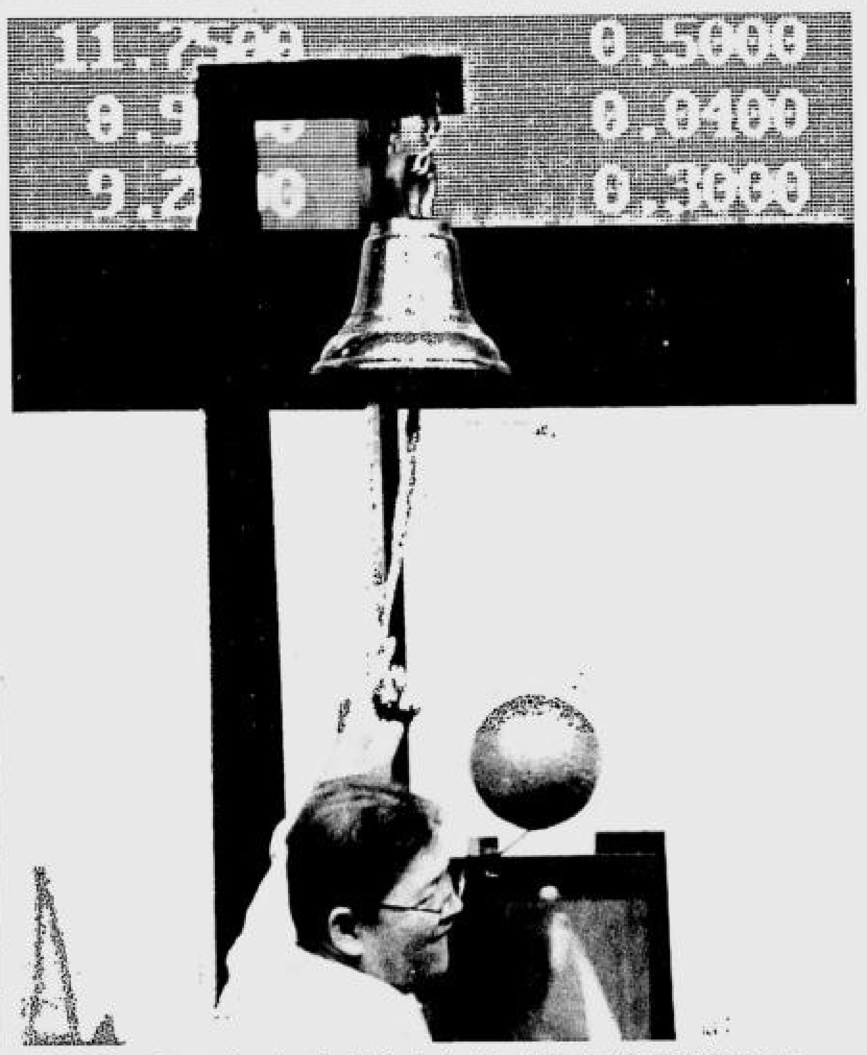
There too, according to the disclosure, is the prospect of enhanced credit rating as a result of the larger market share and asset base of the consolidated cement firm.

Continental was put up in the 1970s to address the country's shortage of locally produced cement. Today, the plant has the capacity to produce 1.52 million metric tons of clinker a year.

Fortune Cement was organized and registered in 1967. Its main purpose is to engage in the production of Portland cement. The company has 347 employees.

Put up in the 1950s, Republic Cement started its operations with a production capacity of about 10,000 bags per day. Now the company is producing more than 50,000 bags a day.

Republic Cement posted a net income of P561 million from January to September 2004, against a net loss of P189 million in the previous year.



A STOCK market trader rings the closing bell at the Philippine Stock Exchange on Tuesday, when share prices closed 0.96 percent higher after heavy losses in the past week due to political concerns. Yesterday, stocks closed 1.87 percent higher. AFP

PLDT seen taking a closer look at Bayantel

By Clarissa S. Batino

IF the price is right, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. said it might consider buying Bayan Telecommunications Inc. from the Lopezes.

Bayantel, Manila North Tollways Corp. and Medical City—all owned by the Lopez group, are for sale, according to Benpres Holdings Corp.

"Why not, if the price is right?" said PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan when asked if his group of companies would consider buying Bayantel.

Pangilinan admitted that the Metro Pacific Corp. would like to buy Benpres' stake in MNTC, the developer and operator of the North Luzon Expressway.

The telecom giant has been gobbling up smaller telcos in the provinces.

PLDT director and ePLDT president Ray Espinosa said Bayantel has a good data business and fixed-line facilities in several provinces.

"We've been buying telcos in the provinces, one of which is MaranawTel. We managed certain areas of Philcom and Paptelco in the provinces. Bayantel can be one investment we may consider if the price is right, and if it will make sense for the group," said Pangilinan.

As for his continuing interest in GMA Network Inc., Pangilinan said an investment in the country's most profitable broadcast firm remained under consideration.

The numbers in consideration have definitely changed since 2001, when PLDT's Mediaquest Holdings had made a bid to acquire 66.67 percent of GMA for P8.5 billion in 2001. At that time, GMA was valued at only P12-P15 billion. Now, the network is worth about P30 billion, according to its owners.

However, Pangilinan admitted that there had been no formal discussion yet with GMA 7. He said he had been talking with GMA president Felipe Gozon and, in the past, he made an offer to the Jimenez family.

"Our relationship has always been good," he said, referring to GMA shareholders.

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Drayton's first significant job was as a creative group head at Leo Burnett Advertising, London where he met and learned from some of the people who worked with Leo Burnett himself.

He has worked with four of the world's top five agency groups, founded five agencies, and currently chairs four - The Drayton Bird Partnership, Bill Fryer Direct, DBCM (Malaysia) and Brandscape.

He was Vice Chairman and Creative Director Worldwide of Ogilvy & Mather Direct and a Board Member of The Ogilvy Group.

Drayton has worked in 39 countries with many famous names. They include Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, American Express, British Telecom, Xerox, The British Tourist Authority, IBM, Microsoft, The Reader's Digest, Hewlett-Packard, Lloyd's Bank, NatWest, Wegener, Samlarhuset, Ford, Visa, McKinsey & Partners, Unilever, A. T. Kearney, Price Waterhouse, Cap Gemini Consulting, Procter & Gamble, Nestle, and British Airways.

He is the author of three books: the standard text, entitled ***Commonsense Direct Marketing, How to Write Sales Letters that Sell, and Marketing Insights and Outrages,*** which have between them been translated into 12 languages.

He has written over 1,000 columns for marketing magazines in Europe, Australia, India, the US and Asia. The Institute of Direct Marketing nominated him one of their first six Honorary Fellows in 1995, and Educator of the Year in 1997. In 2 000 the Direct Marketing Association placed him on their Roll of Honour.

Campaign magazine named him one of the 50 most important individuals in UK advertising during the past 25 years - "the only universally acknowledged point of creativity in the direct marketing world." Direct Response said his impact on UK direct marketing was "unlikely to be matched by any other individual".

In November 2003 he was selected by the Chartered Institute of Marketing as one of 50 people in the world who have shaped the future of marketing, and Precision Marketing readers named him the leading personality in Direct Marketing over the last 15 years.

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RP-China countertrade deal boosts coco exports

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY'S coconut products exports gained a firmer foothold in China as Beijing and Manila agreed to consider adopting a countertrade arrangement to improve a 2004 pact on enhancing the flow of coconut fiber goods to the mainland.

In January 2004, the government signed with China National Technical Import and Export Cooperation a memorandum of understanding that focuses on encouraging the production of coconut coir, coco nut and geotextile which would be exported to China.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino said yesterday that during the 24th Joint Trade Committee meeting held in Manila last week, the two countries had agreed to undertake a feasibility study involving a loan that would come in the form of farm inputs, equipment and services.

Aquino said the Philippine Coconut Authority had proposed to include in the MOU a provision where China would commit to buy the resulting products.

He said that the Chinese negotiators had expressed openness to the proposal as they recognized the acceptability of the products in controlling soil erosion in China.

Coconut fibers are obtained from the fibrous husk of the coconut while coco coir—a durable fiber extracted from discarded coconut husks—is now widely used as basic material in making nets, rolls and mats as protective covers for soils and slopes.

Coco coir has become popular in the United States and in Southeast Asia as a preferred material over concrete bricks and peat moss because it is cheaper and completely biodegradable.

Also, coco coir is regarded as an excellent growing medium for plants and grasses since the fiber has natural rooting hormones and good water-holding capacity.

Aquino also said the JTC had discussed the development of works in various agricultural projects under the Philippine-Sino Center for Agricultural Technology based in Nueva Ecija.

Through the PhilScat, China is demonstrating and promoting its advanced hybrid rice and agricultural mechanization.

China supports comprehensive cooperation in agriculture with the Philippines through a $100-million credit facility signed in December 2000 and arranged through a financial protocol between the Department of Finance and China National Construction and Agricultural Machinery Import and Export Corp.

Last week, Aquino said the two-day JTC meeting was meant to further strengthen economic relations between the country and China, which celebrated last June 9 the 30th year of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Manila.

Aquino said the meeting was also the first bilateral economic talks following President Hu Jintao's state visit to the country earlier this year.

He said the talks covered further joint activities in Mindanao and Palawan; promotion of Philippine products in China; assurance of a steady supply of coal from China, and other pacts entered into with China.

Gov't defers roadshow . . .

From page B1

one of the country's leading commercial banks.

But the trader said there was also a downside to postponing the roadshow. He said it would send the signal to foreign investors that the Philippines was indeed unprepared to face the international market.

The economic team said politics was not the main reason for the postponement of the roadshow. Cruz said the decision was made after the economic team realized that there would be quite a number of bond floats in the international market in the next two weeks.

"It would be foolish on our part to go there and compete for the attention of foreign investors. We want to go there at a time when we will have an undivided attention of investors," Cruz said in a press briefing yesterday.

Cruz said Asian countries alone were expected to float $4.9 billion worth of bonds, while European countries were seen to issue bonds worth 2.8 billion euros.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima explained that many countries were scrambling to float bonds in the next two weeks to beat the July 1 implementation of new disclosure requirements for issuers by the European Union.

"The potential new issue pipeline in Europe is expected to be crowded for the remainder of the month, but we expect a more receptive audience when the current potential issuer backlog has cleared," Purisima said in a statement.

2.9M Filipinos jobless as of April

By Michelle V. Remo

THE UNEMPLOYMENT rate stood at 8.3 percent in April as 2.9 million of the country's labor force were considered jobless, the National Statistics Office yesterday reported.

The NSO said the April figure was based on the newly adopted definition of "unemployment." The NSO said there are now three criteria in considering an individual as unemployed: a person who is at least 15 years old and is (1) reported as jobless, (2) is available for work, and (3) seeking work or not seeking work due to valid reasons.

The NSO said that if the old definition of "unemployed" were used, the unemployment rate would stand at 12.9 percent at 4.79 million. The figure would be better than the 13.7 percent (5 million) recorded in April 2004.

The old definition only had two criteria: (1) without work and (2) looking for work, including those not seeking work with valid reasons.

According to NSO data, most or 49 percent of the unemployed were young individuals aged 15 to 24 years old, which cover those who just graduated from college. It said 28.3 percent were aged 25 to 34 years old, and the rest were above 35 years old.

The NSO also said that the National Capital Region posted the highest unemployment rate at 14.4 percent. Other regions that had double-digit unemployment rates were: Region III (Central Luzon) at 11.4 percent and Region IV-A (Calabarzon) at 11.1 percent.

The government agency said that of the 2.9 million unemployed, 1.1 million (39.5 percent) actually graduated from college. Some 1.3 million, or 43.8 percent, graduated from high school, and 461,000, or 15.8 percent, have reached the elementary level.

Of the 2.9 million unemployed, 1.4 million said they were jobless not because they chose to but because they could not find any job available for them. They added, according to the NSO survey, that they looked for jobs either by directly approaching employers or by seeking assistance from employment agencies.

But about 1.5 million unemployed persons, or 52.7 percent of total unemployed, did not really look for work. Those who did not look for jobs either said they believed there was no available work for them, were still waiting for results of previous job applications, were already too tired job-hunting, were waiting to be rehired, or were disabled or had temporary illness.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose ratings are at record lows as Filipinos complain about rising inflation and pervasive corruption, has promised to create 6 million to 10 million new jobs before the end of her term in 2010.

Underemployment is also a major problem in the country, with millions working only part-time or in jobs below their skills and education.

Some 8 million Filipinos have left for better opportunities abroad. The $8 billion they send home each year is a key source of fuel for the economy, but some analysts say the migration is starving the country of doctors, nurses and other professionals.

PNOC unit seeks partner for Negros exploration project

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC), the country's biggest geothermal energy producer, is seeking a partner to conduct mineral exploration and assessment work in Southern Negros.

In a published bid invitation, the state firm said prospective partners should be "authorized for the purpose of engaging in mining, with technical and financial capability to undertake mineral resources development."

The company should also have a minimum authorized capital stock of P10 million and a minimum paid-up capital of P2.5 million.

Due to the project's high degree of technicality, prospective partners should have at least two geologists with a minimum of five years of professional experience. The geologists' credentials as well as the company's track record in mining operations and environmental management should also be submitted together with the bid.

In the case of a corporation, it should be a holder of an exploration permit, a mineral agreement or a financial or technical assistance agreement.

PNOC-EDC accepted letters of intent (LOIs) and eligibility documents from interested partners up to 5 p.m. of June 13. The state firm, however, declined to disclose how many entities submitted their LOIs, as well their identities.

Parties deemed eligible to bid will be required to submit their financial proposal in two separate sealed envelopes. All bids must also include a bid security that will be callable on demand and valid for 120 days from the date of bid opening.

If in cash, cashier's check, manager's check or certified check, the bid security should be at least P1.38 million. If in the form of a bank guarantee, it should be at least P2.06 million. If in the form of a surety bond, the security should amount to at least P3.44 million.

The financial proposal and bid security will be accepted until 2 p.m. on July 5. Bids will be opened immediately after, in the presence of bidders' representatives.

PNOC-EDC produces more than 60 percent of the country's geothermal energy capacity.

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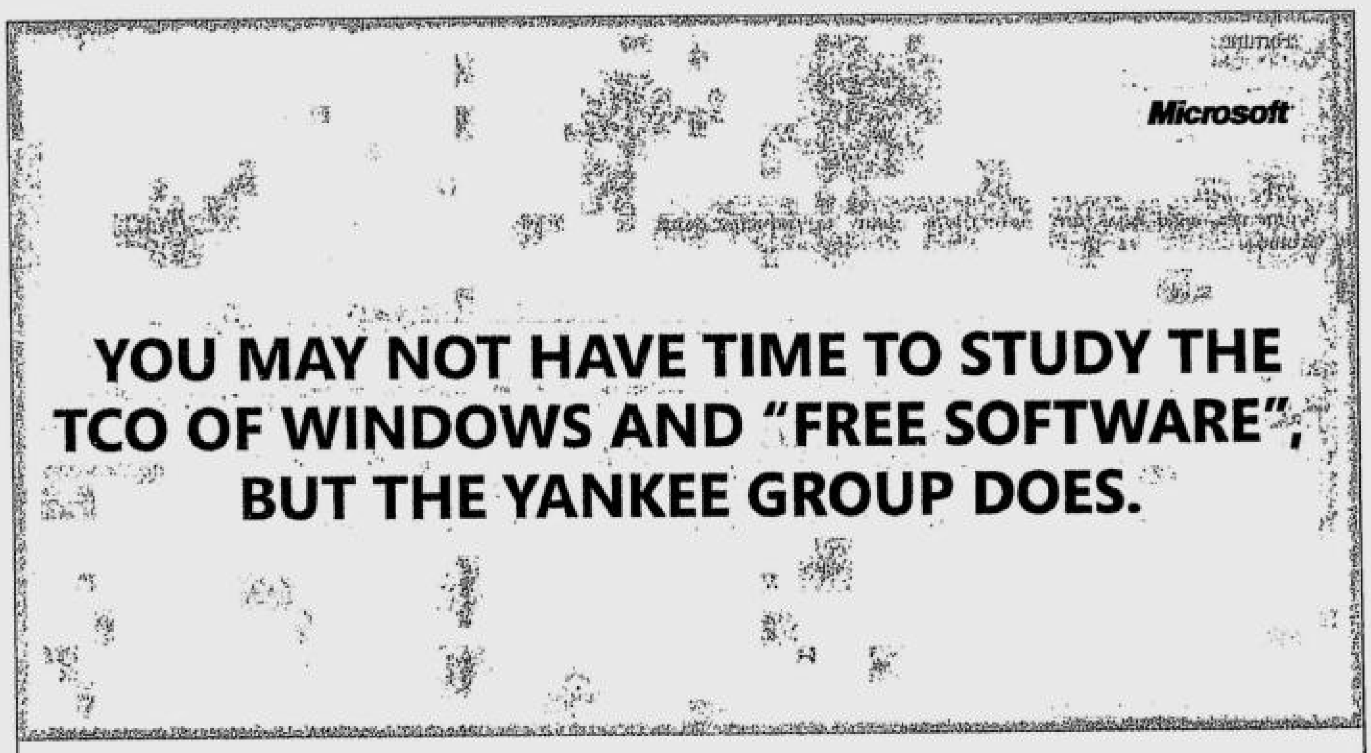
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To get the full study, visit **microsoft.com/getthefacts**

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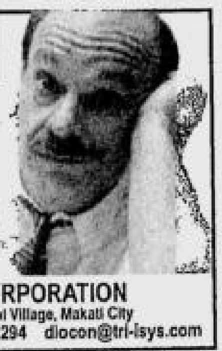
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Telcos see no serious damage yet from political concerns

By Clarissa S. Batino

ABLAZA

NAZARENO

GOKONGWEI

WHILE the tense political situation has not caused any serious damage so far, failure to address the issue quickly could prove lethal to foreign exchange and interest rates and the confidence of investors and creditors, according to businessmen.

Lance Gokongwei, president of JG Summit Corp., which has interests in telecommunications, airlines and banking, said that any lingering uncertainty could put pressure on business.

"Right now, it has not affected us," said Gokongwei, "but anything that increases the perceived uncertainty will tend to have a negative impact."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. Napoleon Nazareno agreed that the exchange rate would be crucial to his company, considering that for every peso that the local currency would shed, PLDT would incur about P2 billion in losses.

"At the moment, we don't see any major impact in operations except for the forex and share price," said Nazareno.

Globe Telecom Inc. president Gerardo Ablaza said that his company was still on a business-as-usual mode.

"As of now, we are not seeing any direct impact on our operations," he said in a text message.

But even before the political upheaval, Ablaza had been worried over the impact of rising inflation and higher taxes.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan, on the other hand, said that companies have to "look through the political situation."

"We are still sanguine. We have to be. This is our country," said the PLDT chair.

The telecom giant is targeting a net income of P27 billion this year against P25 billion last year.

Pangilinan said the company's earnings could even hit P30 billion.

So far, the impact of the uncertainties would be centered on foreign exchange.

"The peso has depreciated compared to where we were in the first quarter. We have given up some of our exchange gains," said Pangilinan.

The same is true for all other companies with foreign borrowings.

PLDT has almost $2 billion in debts.

He said it would be too early to say whether the current political turmoil would make it more difficult for the likes of PLDT to hit its target.

"So far, our revenues are growing, especially on the cellular side. I think our numbers in the second quarter are better than the first quarter. It looks like June is ahead of May," added Pangilinan.

PLDT's core earnings stood at P7 billion in the first three months. Including one-time gains due to a stronger peso in the first quarter, net profits reached P9.4 billion.

Gokongwei said the uncertainties must be addressed and declining confidence should be arrested.

"There are positive things like the passage of the VAT (value added tax)," the JG Summit official said.

For now, the best thing for businesses to do would be to cut costs and find ways to grow revenue.

"We are proceeding with business as usual given all the competitive challenges we are facing," said Nazareno.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO THE DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF LILIO (Laguna), INC.

1. The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) will start its operations for the servicing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Lilio (Laguna), Inc. (RBLI) on Friday, June 17, 2005.
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the following premises of RBLI and file their claims with the PDIC representatives, during office hours, Monday to Friday, to wit:

RBLI Banking Unit	Payoff Site	Duration of Payoff
Head Office	Head Office Bonifacio St., Liliw, Laguna	June 17 to July 12, 2005
Calumpang Extension Office	Calumpang Ext. Office Brgy. Calumpang, Liliw, Laguna	June 17 to July 5, 2005
Sta. Cruz Branch	Sta. Cruz Branch Cor. P. Guevarra & P. Burgos Sts., Sta. Cruz, Laguna	June 17 to July 5, 2005
Santiago Extension Office	Head Office Bonifacio St., Liliw, Laguna	June 17 to July 14, 2005
Nagcarlan Branch	Nagcarlan Branch J. Coronado & Lirio Sts., Nagcarlan, Laguna	June 17 to July 7, 2005

After the said date, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Claims Counter, 6th Floor, SSS BLDG, Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino St., Makati City from Monday to Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. or by mail to:

The Manager
Claims Processing Department
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
2228 Chino Roces Avenue
1231 Makati City

3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook, Certificate of Time Deposit, or Bank Statement including Unused Checks.
   b. Two (2) latest identification cards/documents (IDs) with depositor's signature.

   Other documents may be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended by R.A. 9302, the last day for filing claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Lilio (Laguna), Inc. is on **June 11, 2007. After June 11, 2007**, PDIC, as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

(PDI—June 15 & 16, 2005)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

MSH LEAD

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

Local Enhancement and Development (LEAD) for Health Project

Management Sciences for Health, Inc. (MSH) is a contractor funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) tasked to implement the LEAD for Health Project. The LEAD for Health project is a three year project that aims to strengthen local government provision and management of family planning and selected health services (TB, HIV-AIDS and Vitamin A supplementation) and improve the policies and financing for these services. The project will seek to improve the capacity of the local government units (LGUs) in the Philippines, particularly in cities and municipalities, to meet the needs of their constituents, especially the poor, for family planning, TB and other selected health services. The project will accomplish these goals by (a) strengthening the financial, managerial and technical capacity of LGUs to deliver FP, TB and other selected health services, and developing local level support to deliver these services; and (b) improving the policy and legislative framework at both the national and local levels to finance and support these program. Provision of technical assistance will help the LGUs develop commitment to and ownership of the project.

MSH invites local and international organizations to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the provision of technical services for the project in its coverage areas all over the country. Interested organizations must provide information such as company profile, brochure, description/experience of similar assignments, description of geographic networks within the country (detailing regional, provincial and/or municipal experiences), availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc. EOIs must be in writing and delivered to the address indicated below no later than 21 June 2005.

Performance-Based Contracts (PBC) Unit
Suite 1101 Ma. Natividad Building
470 T.M. Kalaw corner Cortada Streets, Ermita, Manila
Tel. No. (02) 526-3877
Fax. No. (02) 521-0227
Email: pbcmanager@lead.org.ph

All EOIs shall be evaluated by MSH and only qualified organizations shall be invited for a pre-bid conference scheduled on a later date. Pre-qualified organizations shall be provided with bidding documents. The pre-bid conference shall be convened to discuss the details and questions regarding the bid documents.

MSH reserves the right to reject any or all Application for Pre-qualification, waive any required formality therein, and accept the bid and award the subcontract to the most advantageous offer to the project. MSH assumes no responsibility to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee an award will be made.

(PDI – June 16, 2005)

BOI approves mass housing projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments announced yesterday that it had approved two mass housing projects to be developed in Cavite and Cagayan worth some P199 million in investments.

According to the BOI, Grand Metro Asia Inc. would invest P183 million in its project dubbed Ciudad Pangarap Subdivision in Trece Martires City in Cavite.

GMAI plans to build 2,826 units of low-cost housing within 100,277 square meters of land.

The package price of the houses range from P225,000 to P400,000 and would be sold through Pag-ibig financing.

GMAI's major stockholders include Banners Ventures & Management Corp. and Macondray Capital Corp.

Cuidad Pangarap is geared toward the low- and medium-income earners in private and government agencies in Trece Martirez and neighboring towns, especially those working in the technology parks.

Firm Builders Realty Development Corp., meanwhile, has earmarked P16 million for the development of the Rio del Grande Subdivision Phase 1-B along the national highway in Enrile town in Cagayan.

Rio del Grande involves 144 low-cost units that would be built in a 2.6-hectare parcel of land.

The flagship unit of Firm Builders Group, FBRDC was established in 1992 to focus on socialized housing projects.

The company has so far completed the development of 20 low-cost housing subdivisions covering a total area of 234.6 hectares and 9,258 housing units.

These projects are mostly located in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said tax perks and other incentives were being given to low-cost housing projects as part of the government's program on shelter program.

"By providing incentives to realty and construction firms, we make the business of low-cost mass housing attractive to investors," Santos explained.

T-bond rates down 6 bps

By Michelle V. Remo

FIVE-YEAR Treasury bond rate dropped by 6 basis points to 10.876 percent yesterday, as the market preferred medium-term over short-term government securities amid the current political turmoil.

"The thing here is that over the five-year period, the view of the market is different [compared with the short-term]. Their [investors] concerns are over the short-term" National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a press briefing after the T-bond auction yesterday.

The market, composed mostly of banks, showed strong appetite for the five-year T-bond.

Tenders for the government security reached P9.46 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P4 billion.

The Bureau of Treasury's auction committee accepted P4 billion worth of bids, thus raising in full its borrowing schedule yesterday.

The slight decline in the rate of the five-year T-bond was a reversal of the rise in the 91-day Treasury bill rate last Tuesday.

The rate for the 91-day T-bill, a benchmark used by banks in pricing loans, increased by 9.3 basis points to 5.784 percent.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 15, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30.5	33	30.5	33	855,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	50.5	48	50.5	3,962,100
China Banking Corp.	770	770	770	770	1,580
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.5	20,600
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.61	970,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49.5	51	49	49	401,500
International Exch. Bank	18.75	19	18.75	19	221,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	31	31	226,600
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	4,940
Philippine National Bank	39	41.5	39	41	578,900
Phil. Savings Bank	31	32	31	32	5,000
Philippine Trust Co.	35	35	35	35	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11	11	11	11	11,000
Security Bank Corp.	26.5	26.5	26	26	141,100
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2570	2570	2550	2550	510
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.06	867,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1710	1740	1710	1740	2,260
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12	12	11.5	11.5	16,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	4,056,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	835	840	830	835	28,260
Ipeople Inc.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.4	36,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	1,200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	8,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.25	3.15	3.25	1,290,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1560	1615	1560	1605	246,120
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	600,000
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	53,500,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	16	113,100
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24.25	23.75	24	560,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.6	5,988,000
Petron Corp.	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3,184,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2	2	2	2	15,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.14	432,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.8	8	7.8	8	1,520,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	80,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.57	0.61	0.57	0.6	3,690,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.45	3.5	3.4	3.4	2,543,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	28,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	150,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	32	32	32	32	11,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	307,800
San Miguel Corp. A	59	59.5	58.5	59.5	49,200
San Miguel Corp. B	90.5	91	90.5	91	343,000
Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.5	16.75	75,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	9,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	41,000,000
Ayala Corp.	345	357.5	345	355	73,110
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.48	0.5	130,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	5	4.8	5	211,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10	10.5	10	10.5	700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.03	8,900,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.98	2	1.98	2	141,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	24,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	40,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	10,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	16,077,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.19	0.17	0.19	1,800,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	790,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	6,920,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.55	2.65	2.55	2.65	1,127,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.14	1.22	1.14	1.18	2,012,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.4	352,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	49.5	48	49	422,900
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	50,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	12,600,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	20,000
Ionics Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.16	1.16	173,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc.	3.7	3.95	3.7	3.95	2,648,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	1.94	1.9	1.9	121,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.44	1.32	1.44	8,651,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	410,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.39	22,950,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.25	0.21	0.25	510,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	100,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	255	252.5	255	110,280
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	5,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.19	5,510,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	400,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.11	0.09	0.11	2,400,000
Philippine Seven Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	25,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.1	1.16	1.1	1.14	11,487,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.77	0.75	0.77	390,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.1	808,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	11	11.25	11	11.25	778,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8	8.2	8	8.2	8,408,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	30,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	5,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.93	0.9	0.93	1,110,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.29	1,950,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.23	0.215	0.23	860,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	8,170,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.48	1.56	1.48	1.56	7,186,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.6	24,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8	8	7.8	7.8	6,521,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	60,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	67,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.8	6	5.8	5.8	719,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3	3	3	3	20,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	260,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	1,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.014	0.017	0.014	0.016	142,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	202,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	94,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.93	620,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	1,830,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	32	205,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	290,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.007	0.006	0.0065	144,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	16,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.3	0.38	0.3	0.38	160,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	4,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.15	4,450,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	500,000

DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of **Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company** were Antonio O. Cojuanco, Helen Y. Dee, Ray C. Espinosa, Sadao Maki, Napoleon L. Nazareno, Manuel V. Pangilinan, Corazon S. de la Paz, Albert F. del Rosario and Shigeru Yoshida. Independent directors are Bienvenido F. Nebres, Oscar S. Reyes, Pedro E. Roxas and Teresita T. Sy-Coson.

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ELECTED directors of **City & Land Developers Inc.** were Atty. Sabino Padilla Jr., Stephen C. Roxas, Dr. Andrew I. Liuson, Grace C. Liuson, Helen C. Roxas, Peter Dee and Alice C. Gohoc.

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ANGLO Philippine Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 29, 3 p.m. at the Del Pilar Room, The Legends Villas, 60 Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City. Stockholders of record as of May 27 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Erika A. Sarmiento, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

June 15, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.831324	1.000000	55.3520
Japan	Yen	0.007592	0.009133	0.5055
United Kingdom	Pound	1.501455	1.806100	99.9712
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106945	0.128644	7.1207
Switzerland	Franc	0.650845	0.782901	43.3351
Canada	Dollar	0.663573	0.798212	44.1826
Singapore	Dollar	0.495308	0.595806	32.9791
Australia	Dollar	0.635132	0.764000	42.2889
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.205163	2.652590	146.8262
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221681	0.266660	14.7602
Brunei	Dollar	0.493837	0.594036	32.8811
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000104	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.020321	0.024444	1.3530
UAE	Dirham	0.226346	0.272272	15.0708
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.202900	66.5829
Argentina	Peso	0.289660	0.348432	19.2864
Brazil	Real	0.341884	0.411252	22.7636
Denmark	Kroner	0.134366	0.161629	8.9465
India	Rupee	0.019081	0.022952	1.2704
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218799	0.263193	14.5683
Mexico	New Peso	0.076772	0.092349	5.1117
New Zealand	Dollar	0.588423	0.707814	39.1789
Norway	Kroner	0.127189	0.152996	8.4686
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013941	0.016770	0.9283
South Africa	Rand	0.120832	0.145349	8.0454
Korea	Won	0.000819	0.000985	0.0545
Sweden	Kroner	0.107757	0.129621	7.1748
Syria	Pound	0.016015	0.019264	1.0663
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026424	0.031786	1.7594
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000387	0.000466	0.0258

New lease on life eyed for SPV law

SPECIAL REPORT

By Michelle V. Remo

IT IS with a sense of urgency that the country's banks want the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) law extended. Apparently, the two-year duration of the law, which expired last April, was not enough to unload the bulk of the estimated P500 billion in non-performing assets (NPAs) that have been weighing down on the industry.

The SPV law, which granted fiscal incentives to transactions related to the sale of NPAs to special purpose vehicles, was created to encourage financial institutions to unload their soured assets, which have been cited as one of the biggest hurdles challenging the growth of the banking sector.

The fiscal incentives, aside from 50-percent discount on registration and transfer fees, also include exemptions from several taxes, including documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax, creditable withholding income tax, and value-added tax.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, only 17 percent, or P93 billion, of the total NPAs of the industry were sold to SPVs within the two-year duration of the law.

Because the BSP set as one of its primary goals the improvement of the balance sheets of banks over the near term, it has been prodding Congress to immediately pass the bill seeking to extend the SPV law by another two years.

The BSP hopes the bill would be passed in a month or two to capitalize on the resurgence of interest among banks to sell their NPAs.

Warm response

Both houses of Congress seem to have warmly responded to the BSP's call.

PURISIMA

The Lower House and the Senate are already hearing their own versions of the bill, although legislators earlier placed the bill on the back burner while preoccupied with the recently passed value-added tax bill.

"NPAs are deadly. If you look at the financial statements of banks, one striking thing to notice is the high non-performing loan ratios that decrease their profitability," said BSP Deputy Governor for Bank Supervision Nestor Espenilla Jr.

According to Espenilla, the banking industry's NPL ratio peaked at 18 percent at the height of the Asian financial crisis that begun in 1997.

It has recently improved to 11.8 percent after the banking industry unloaded some P93 billion in soured loans. But Espenilla said the NPL ratio was still relatively high.

He said what was ideal was to bring down the NPL ratio close to the 5-percent level, the level the banks were at before the crisis erupted. It may be recalled that the crisis took its toll on the banking sector, as other industries, especially the real estate, could no longer service their huge liabilities from banks.

Heated debate

The practicality of extending the SPV law by another two years, however, is being questioned in the light of the country's fiscal problem. The government has been conscious about agreeing to more fiscal incentives, such as tax exemptions, as it needs all the money it can collect.

The Department of Finance, given the daunting task of solving the country's fiscal problem, was initially cool to the idea of extending the SPV law, but it later agreed given the strong lobbying by the banking sector and the BSP's support for the extension of the SPV law.

The DOF said it was amenable to the proposed extension of the law, but that it should only be for one year, instead of the proposed two years. It later agreed to a two-year extension.

While agreeing with the two-year extension, the DOF however suggested that the tax perks should only cover loans that were approved on or before Jan. 10, 2003, the date when the original SPV law took effect.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said allotting two more years for banks to avail themselves of tax incentives was good, as long as there were limits on the coverage of loans.

"We want to emphasize that the SPV route should be looked at as a one-time opportunity to fix the NPL problem and not as a quick fix tool that can be tapped to address the NPAs of banks from time to time," Purisima said.

Tax incentives

According to DOF estimates, the government gave out about P700 million worth of tax incentives during the two years that the SPV law was in effect. Should the law be extended, the government's revenue losses could hit over P2 billion, the DOF said.

Aside from the practicality of giving out tax perks amid the ongoing fiscal problem, the DOF also questioned the eagerness of banks to have the law extended when they did not fully take advantage of it during its effectivity. For the two years that the SPV law was in effect, the amount of bad assets sold did not even reach 20 percent of the total amount of NPAs of the banking industry.

For its part, the BSP admitted that banks did not show much appreciation of the SPV law. Espenilla said banks did not sell their bad assets until only the few months before the law was set to expire. But he said the behavior of banks was understandable.

"It really took a long time before banks fully understood the benefits of the law," Espenilla said. He said the delay in appreciation of the law had to do with the cost banks have to give up in selling their bad assets to SPVs. Under transactions related to sale of NPAs to SPVs, the bad assets are sold at a steeply discounted price equivalent to 20 to 30 percent of the original value of the assets.

CORONEL

Now that banks already appreciate the benefits of selling their bad assets with the privilege of getting tax exemptions, Espenilla said, they are expected to hasten the unloading of their NPAs once the SPV law is extended.

The Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP), responding to criticisms over banks' delayed response to the SPV law, said two years was not really enough for them to sell the bulk of their NPAs because SPV transactions take a long time.

Delayed response

BAP executive director Leonilo Coronel said the DOF's initial proposal to have the SPV law extended for only one year would not be enough to help the banking industry significantly improve their balance sheets.

The BAP, in fact, originally lobbied for a five-year duration of the SPV law, but later on agreed with two years after seeing the difficulty of having its request granted due to the government's poor fiscal situation.

"It takes time to negotiate. It is only now that potential investors (who will buy the banks' bad assets) are beginning to appreciate this," he said.

Coronel also argued that the late issuance of the law's implementing rules and regulations was likewise to blame for the delayed response of banks to the SPV law. He noted that the IRR was issued only six months before the SPV law was to expire.

"Some banks were waiting for the IRR because transactions would be based on its details," he said.

The banking industry said all kinds of support the government could give to improve its competitiveness were important, but that the BAP was not expecting much from the fiscally troubled government.

Coronel said what banks simply wished for was to have the SPV law extended.

In other countries where the banking sector also suffered from huge bad debts, the governments took greater effort to nurse the industry back to a sound financial health.

In Korea and Indonesia, for instance, the governments bailed out their banks by buying their bad assets.

Espenilla said the move of the Indonesian and Korean governments to bail out their banks from high NPL ratios, which peaked at 40 percent during the crisis years, already improved the ratios to the ideal single-digit levels.

The BSP official said the Philippine government could not afford to do the same heroic act, considering it was still grappling with its budget problem. Extending the SPV law, however, was something the Philippine government should be able to afford, he said.

Bangko Sentral seen easing bank reserve requirement in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

REVERSING the tightening since the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, the Bangko the Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said it would gradually ease the reserve requirement on banks starting next year.

"We would like to be able to gradually reduce the reserve requirements in the medium-term and in a manner consistent with the maintenance of price stability," BSP Officer-in-Charge Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex) forum yesterday.

"At the same time, it would be important to further enhance market-oriented instruments as a means of improving the implementation of monetary policy," he said.

Tetangco said the planned reduction in the reserve requirement would not likely happen within the next six months.

"We'll see if we could start bringing it down by next year," he told reporters after his speech.

The reserve requirement, along with the overnight borrowing rate, is a.BSP tool used in mopping up excess liquidity in the financial system. The BSP last increased the reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and quasi-banks by two percentage points to 19 percent in February 2004, as a preemptive response to threats arising from the sharp peso depreciation then.

"We already started reducing the reserve requirement prior to the 1997 financial crisis," Tetangco said, noting that in other countries, such requirement was only at about 10 percent.

He said the pace at which the reduction in the reserve requirement would happen would depend on three things: the country's inflation path, demand for money and the availability of market-oriented instruments.

"If there's a reduction or downward trajectory in the inflation path, that can be a factor that may allow reductions in the reserve requirement," he said.

By next year, the BSP expects the inflation rate to fall within the government ceiling after overshooting targets last year and, most likely, this year too.

VICTORIAS
MILLING COMPANY, INC.

NOTICE OF LOSS

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC., Victorias City, Negros Occidental would like to inform the public of the **loss of the signature template** of Mr. Abelardo E. Bugay, President and Miss Teresita V. Ilagan, Controller, last June 7, 2005.

The last valid VMC computerized checks bearing the template signatures of the abovementioned officers have the following numbers.

East West Bank, Bacolod	527617
Equitable PCIB, Victorias	090397

All subsequent computerized checks and any other bank checks, including VMC Sugar Quedans and VMC Molasses Storage Receipts (MSR) bearing the template signatures of the above VMC signatories should not be honored.

In the same manner, any checks bearing the signature template of Mr. Abelardo E. Bugay and Mr. Nilo A. Florcruz should likewise not be honored

(Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN
Controller

Rules for power retailers readied

By Abigail L. Ho

IN PREPARATION for retail competition and open access, the Energy Regulatory Commission has drafted the ground rules on how technically and financially capable entities can become retail electricity suppliers (RES).

According to the draft guidelines on securing RES licenses, qualified entities can supply electricity to the "contestable market" once retail competition and open access is declared.

"Contestable market" refers to electricity end-users who are given the right to choose their own power suppliers. For a person or organization to qualify as a RES, financial and technical capabilities must be proven.

On the financial aspect, a license applicant should have one of the following to prove its financial capability: an investment-grade credit rating by a reputable credit bureau; unused cash resources equivalent to the expected monthly billings or at least P10 million, or a proof of creditworthiness as confirmed through certifications from firms that have extended credit terms to the applicant, including generation firms, the National Transmission Corp. and distribution utilities.

On the technical side, an applicant must be able to enter into interconnection arrangements or other required contracts with one or more distributors; secure generation through compliance with all requirements of Transco and the market operator; meet transactional requirements with the market operator or its contractual obligations with any industry participant, and have adequate staff training to meet all service commitments.

An applicant for a RES license, including any of its stockholders, directors, officers or these people's relatives up to the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, must not own any direct or indirect interest in Transco or its eventual concessionaire.

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In loving Memory of

HON. CELESTINA A. CATARINA

Barangay Chairman, Brgy. Calape, Daanbantayan, Cebu (1989-2005)
President, Association of Barangay Captains, Daanbantayan, Cebu (1997-2002)

Who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on June 8, 2005 at the age of 95.

Her bereaved children **Erlinda C. Bagolor vda. de Dr. Alfredo Bagolor, Herminia de Castro vda. de Ricardo de Castro, Alfredo Catarina Jr.** and **Mina Catarina, Juanina Catarina vda. de Godofredo Catarina, Hon. Aleta C. Suarez** and **Cong. Danilo E. Suarez, Pureza C. Go** and **Arch. Casey S. Go, Grace C. Jayson** and **Ahmed P. Jayson, Victor A. Catarina** and **Cerila D. Catarina, Brenda C. Roldan** and **David Roldan, Ida C. Tancawan** and **Nerio J. Tancawan**; loving grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Brgy. Calape, Daanbantayan, Cebu. Holy Mass will be held on June 18, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. at the San Antonio De Padua Chapel, Brgy. Calape, Daanbantayan, Cebu.

Interment will be on June 18, 2005 after 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Private Cemetery, Brgy. Calape, Daanbantayan, Cebu.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of

RAUL REYES MIRANDA

November 13, 1962 – May 14, 2005

would like to express our deep gratitude to all who offered masses and prayers, sent flowers, gifts and mass cards, and who helped, comforted and prayed with us in our bereavement.

On the 40th day anniversary, June 22, Holy Mass will be offered at 6:00 p.m. at the Claret Church (Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish), Mahinhin St., U.P. Village, Quezon City.

AURORA O. ONGCHANGCO

joined her husband, Magtangol, and our Creator on 15 June 2005 at the age of 82.

Her bereaved children: **Gil & Bing, Nellie & Rey, Guia, Jonas & Angie, Yeyet & Dino**; grandchildren **Micko, Miguel, Aqi, Nonoy & Manel, Jonjon & Abby, Memel, Japoy, Patti** and **Patrick** and great grandchildren request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Ascension Chapel, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, UP Teachers' Village, Diliman, Quezon City.

Cremation follows at the Loyola Memorial Park Crematory in Marikina at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, 18 June 2005 after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life"
John 11:25

REV. FR. QUIRINO GLORIOSO y GLODOVIZA,

A priest of the Diocese of San Pablo was called by God to his presence on June 14, 2005 at the age of 102.

His remains lie in state at St. Peter's College Seminary, San Pablo City.

Interment follows after Funeral Mass on Friday, June 17, 2005, 2:00 PM at the San Pablo Cathedral, San Pablo City.

Please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

VITA NON TOLLITUR, SED MUTATUR

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. *John 14:6*

ERRATUM

In the obituary advertisement of **GERMELINA ALCANTARA ESPENILLA** published June 15, 2005 in this paper, interment day should have been **Thursday, June 16, 2005** not Friday.

Together with the Family of our Beloved

GODOFREDO "GODY" RAMOS SISON

who peacefully joined his Creator
on May 31, 2005 at the age of 60.

Family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His ashes will be transferred from Las Vegas Nevada, USA to his ancestral home in Balayan, Batangas on June 17, 2005.

Funeral Mass will be held at Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Balayan, Batangas at 2 P.M. on June 18, 2005.

"Do not be afraid - I will save you. I have called you by name - you are mine."
— Isaiah 43:1

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

In Loving Memory

of the 20th Death Anniversary of

FELICISIMO MANUMBALE GARING, Sr.

former Mayor, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro

Masses will be offered on Sunday, June 19, 2005 at the following churches:

San Nicholas De Tolentino Parish Church *Naujan, Oriental Mindoro*	6:30 AM & 8:00 AM
Sanctuario De San Jose *Greenhills, San Juan*	7:15 AM
St. Benedict Chapel *Alabang Hills Village, Muntinlupa City*	7:45 AM
Christ the King Mission Seminary *E. Rodriguez, Sr. Ave., Quezon City*	7:00 AM
San Nicolas De Tolentino Parish Church *Project 8, Quezon City*	8:30 AM

His loving son **Atty. Silverio "Biyong" R. Garing**; brothers, sisters and the rest of the family, request those whose lives he touched and the readers, to pray for his eternal happiness.

In Loving Memory
on the 5th Death Anniversary of

"Until we see you again Papa in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

TAM SUN

(Pam Ah Poo)

August 1, 1929 - June 16, 2000
Tanjay City, Negros Oriental

Holy Masses will be offered in his honor on June 16, 2005 at the following churches in Negros Oriental and in Metro Manila:

St. James The Greater Parish Church *Tanjay City, Negros Oriental*	5:45 a.m./ 5:00 p.m./ 6:00 p.m.
San Andres The Apostle Parish *Amlan, Negros Oriental*	6:00 a.m.
San Antonio de Padua Parish *Sibulan, Negros Oriental*	6:30 a.m./ 5:30 p.m.
St. Catherine de Alexandria Parish *Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental*	5:00 a.m./ 5:00 p.m.
Holy Cross Parish *Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental*	6:00 a.m.
Immaculate Concepcion Parish Dumaguete City	6:30 a.m.
St. Joseph the Worker Parish *San Jose, Negros Oriental*	6:00 a.m.
St. Nicolas de Tolentino Parish Church *Bais City, Negros Oriental*	6:00 a.m.
St. Francis de Assisi Parish Church *Manjuyod, Negros Oriental*	6:00 a.m.
Sta. Cruz Parish *Palanas, Tanjay City*	6:00 a.m.
Mary The Queen Parish *West Greenhills, San Juan*	7:00 a.m./6:00 p.m.
Sts. Peter & Paul Parish *P. Burgos Street, Makati City*	6:00 a.m. /6:30 p.m.
Christ The King Parish *Greenmeadows, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m. /6:00 p.m.

The blessing of his Mausoleum will be at 4:30 p.m. at the Tanjay Serenity Park.

His wife, Angela R. Tam, children and children-in-law together with all his grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives, and friends request the pious readers to remember Tam Sun in their prayers.

"Our father already reunited with his Creator in Heaven, but his presence and guidance never left us and we will continue to cherish him for as long as we live. God has our dearly beloved father in HIS keeping, and we have him in our hearts forever."

Our dearly beloved

PACIFICO I. SANCHEZ

Peacefully joined our Creator on June 12, 2005 at the age of 79.

His loving wife **Leonida**; children **Margie** and **Nestor Dungo**, **Cecile** and **Bert Alba**, **Jackie** and **Dave Reyes**; grandchildren **Shawn**, **Alexa**, **Clarisse**, **Alyssa**, **Catherine** and **Nicholas** request all pious readers to pray for his eternal rest with our Lord.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at # 75 Aniban Bacoor, Cavite.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 19, 2005 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Silangan Memorial Garden, Bacoor, Cavite.

Together with the Family of our Beloved

ENGR. REYNALDO H. FRANCISCO SR.

"Ado"

announce his joining the Creator on June 11, 2005 at the age of 66.

His beloved wife **Lilian**; children **Rose**, **Jojo**, **Rizza**, **Zaldy**, **Zandro**, and **Franz** request for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at **#426 Carnauba Palm, Palmera 1, Ortigas Ext., Taytay, Rizal.**

Interment will be on **Saturday, June 18, 2005** at **Taytay Public Cemetery** after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the **St. John the Baptist Parish, Taytay, Rizal.**

"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he dies; will live and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." John 11:25-26

In Loving Memory
on the
1st Death Anniversary of our Beloved

ROSALINDA TIANGCO-ALINDOGAN

(August 29, 1933 — June 16, 2004)

Holy Masses will be offered today, June 16, 2005 at the following churches:

St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish Magallanes Village, Makati City	6:15 AM 7:00 AM 12:15 NN 6:00 PM
Santuario de San Antonio McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City	6:15 AM 7:30 AM 12:15 NN 6:00 PM
The National Shrine of St. Michael The Archangel 1000 J.P. Laurel, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 AM 6:00 PM
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish 4098 Bougainville Rd., Sun Valley Subd., Parañaque	6:00 AM 7:00 AM 6:30 PM
Basilica Del Sto. Niño Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City	6:00 AM 7:00 AM 8:00 AM 5:30 PM
Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church 7669 Girard Ave., La Jolla, California 92037	8:00 AM
St. Mark Catholic Church 18033 15th Place NE Shoreline, WA 98155	8:00 AM
St. Thomas More Catholic Church 6511 176th St. SW Lynnwood, WA 98037	9:00 AM

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647	1,941,000.00
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417	1,501,200.00
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354	1,261,250.00
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456	1,625,000.00
300	993,750.00
347	1,150,000.00

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Puerto Del Mar

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208	916,000.00
206	875,000.00
208	880,000.00
228	930,000.00
216	900,000.00
204	798,000.00
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244	1,294,000.00
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Greenplains II, Singcang Airport, Bacolod City
La Herencia Negrensa Subdivision, Bacolod City

Area	Selling Price
381	₱1,584,000.00
654	1,099,500.00
412	741,500.00
824	1,236,000.00
503	754,500.00
669	₱1,003,500.00
729	1,093,500.00
1,084	1,626,000.00
368	552,000.00
741	1,111,500.00

** for as low as ₱6,800.00 per month*

ILOILO CITY

Puerto Real Subdivision, Phase I, Brgy. Tabuc Suba, La Paz District, Iloilo City

Area	Selling Price
325	₱ 975,000.00
330	990,000.00
380	1,140,000.00
323	969,000.00
312	936,000.00
329	₱ 987,000.00
333	999,000.00
339	1,017,000.00
341	1,023,000.00
442	1,326,000.00

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

INSULATION and CLADDING WORKS for the SOUTHERN NEGROS GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD (SNGPF) REINJECTION LINES
EDC 05-056-1

The Approved Budget is PhP 7,086,954.65 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is one hundred thirty five (135) calendar days.

Application forms for Eligibility and the Bidding Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o N. A. Nicolasora) starting June 16, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand Five Hundred (P1,500.00).**

Site inspection is on **July 8, 2005.** For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **July 12, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the BAC Conference Room, First Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Application for eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, First Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City **not later than 2:00 p.m. (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time) of August 4, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI – June 16, 2005)

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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PD Ref. No.: PB050427-EL0036

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR HEAD OFFICE**, wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

Schedule	Item Description	PR No.	Approved Budget
I	MOBILE PC	11 Units	P 1,375,000.00
II	MOBILE PC	1 Unit	P 125,000.00
III	DESKTOP PC	55 Units	P 4,675,000.00
IV	DESKTOP PC	2 Units	P 170,000.00
V	MULTIMEDIA PROJECTOR	3 Units	P 540,000.00
VI	LCD MULTIMEDIA PROJECTOR	1 Unit	P 250,000.00
VII	LASERJET PRINTER (STANDALONE)	1 Unit	P 35,000.00
VIII	LASERJET PRINTER (NETWORK)	8 Units	P 400,000.00
IX	INKJET PRINTER	15 Units	P 270,000.00
X	A3 INKJET PRINTER	1 Unit	P 25,000.00
XI	DOT MATRIX PRINTER	1 Unit	P 35,000.00
XII	MOBILE PRINTER	1 Unit	P 25,000.00
XIII	COLOR LASERJET PRINTER	1 Unit	P 60,000.00
XIV	SCANNER	9 Units	P 135,000.00
XV	FACSIMILE	4 Units	P 80,000.00
XVI	PC SERVER	1 Unit	P 500,000.00
XVII	MONITOR, 17"	3 Units	P 54,000.00
XVIII	UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY	4 Units	P 28,000.00
XIX	EXTERNAL FLOPPY DISK DRIVE	1 Piece	P 3,000.00
XX	CRYSTAL REPORT VERSION XI FPP	2 Units	P 79,200.00
XXI	LASERJET PRINTER	1 Unit	P 63,000.00

TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET FOR CONTRACT TO BE BID: P 8,927,200.00

1. Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting June 7, 2005 to July 5, 2005 at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00)** per set.
2. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before 2:00 p.m. of July 6, 2005 at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date is declared non-working day, the new deadline for submission shall be announced through a Bid Bulletin. Submission of documents must be clear, legible and readable. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
3. Pre-bid conference will be held on June 24, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
4. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
5. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
6. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ARMANDO N. OCHOA**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - June 16 & 22, 2005)

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PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION FOR ACCREDITATION OF SECURITY AGENCIES

The PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO) will be accepting applications for accreditation from licensed private security agencies.

Accreditation Forms shall be available for issuance at the PMO, 4th Floor, Asset Management and Custodianship Division, upon presentation of original PNP / SAGSD license to operate, PADPAO certification and payment of P300.00 non-refundable fee. Both PNP / SAGSD-issued license to operate and PADPAO certification should be unexpired before the submission of the required accreditation forms.

Security agencies that have been accredited by and/or previously engaged by the Asset Privatization Trust (APT) and PMO and/or currently doing business with PMO are not required to participate.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Accreditation Forms and other requirements shall be at 3:00 P.M. of June 30, 2005 at the PMO, 6th Floor Conference Room, 104 Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

For more information, please call Mr. George Keyser at 818-4625 or Mr. Loreto Santos at 817-6661.

(PDI–June 16, 17 & 18, 2005)

SHOWN are Cesar A. Averia, Jr., (right, front row), president and CEO of EDI-Staffbuilders International Inc. with the ILO officials and delegates during the Policy Dialogue on the Agents of International Labour Migration held in Geneva, Switzerland.

NFA rolling stores now sell vegetables

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal Arroyo led ranking agriculture and local officials in the initial sale of low-priced vegetables through the rolling stores of the National Food Authority in Camarin, Caloocan City recently. The initial sale signals the inclusion of vegetables in the food and basic commodities being sold through the rolling stores which include NFA rice, sugar, cooking oil, sardines, coffee, milk and noodles. These vegetables are those used in cooking chopsuey, pinakbet and sinigang dishes. Coinciding with the vegetable sale is the launching by President Arroyo of the National Pre-school Education and Supplemental Feeding Program. The President will be joined by Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, NFA administrator Gregorio Y. Tan Jr., Caloocan City mayor Recom Echiverri, among others. For more information on NFA programs, please send inquiries via text NFA through mobile number 0917-6210927. For more information on programs of the Department of Agriculture, please visit the DA's official website at www.da.gov.ph.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Manfred Karl Hermann Krause has been the subject of a deed of extrajudicial settlement with waiver by his heirs as per Doc. No 80, Page No. 17, Book No. CX, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Benjamin L. Rabo of Q.C (PDI-June 9, 16, 23, 2005)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **July 12, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FDC) Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila, to all interested rice suppliers for the supply of maximum **92,000 MT**, long grain white rice, non-iron fortified, 15% and 25% brokens, in fifty (50) kilograms net each in polypropylene bags suitable for rice export with NFA markings to be loaded in bulk carrier/s with an appropriated budget from corporate resources of Php29.44 M. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.A. A Maximum of 50,000 MT shall be awarded in case of Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.A. origin.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for all specifications on CFR FO basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of one hundred twenty (120) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of countertrade performed on best effort. Otherwise, bids shall be considered non-responsive.

Arrival period shall be **NLT August 31, 2005.**

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:

SUPPLIER	VOLUME (MT)
Government (with good track record)	92,000
Private (with good track record)	30,000
Government/private (without track record)	15,000

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. Vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank. Bid bond can be converted to performance bond.

List of Eligibility Requirements and instructions to bidders may be secured starting **June 17, 2005** thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Chief III, Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **June 17 to July 8, 2005** (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on **June 28, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FDC) Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of bids will be on **July 12, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FDC) Auditorium, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - June 16 & 23, 2005)

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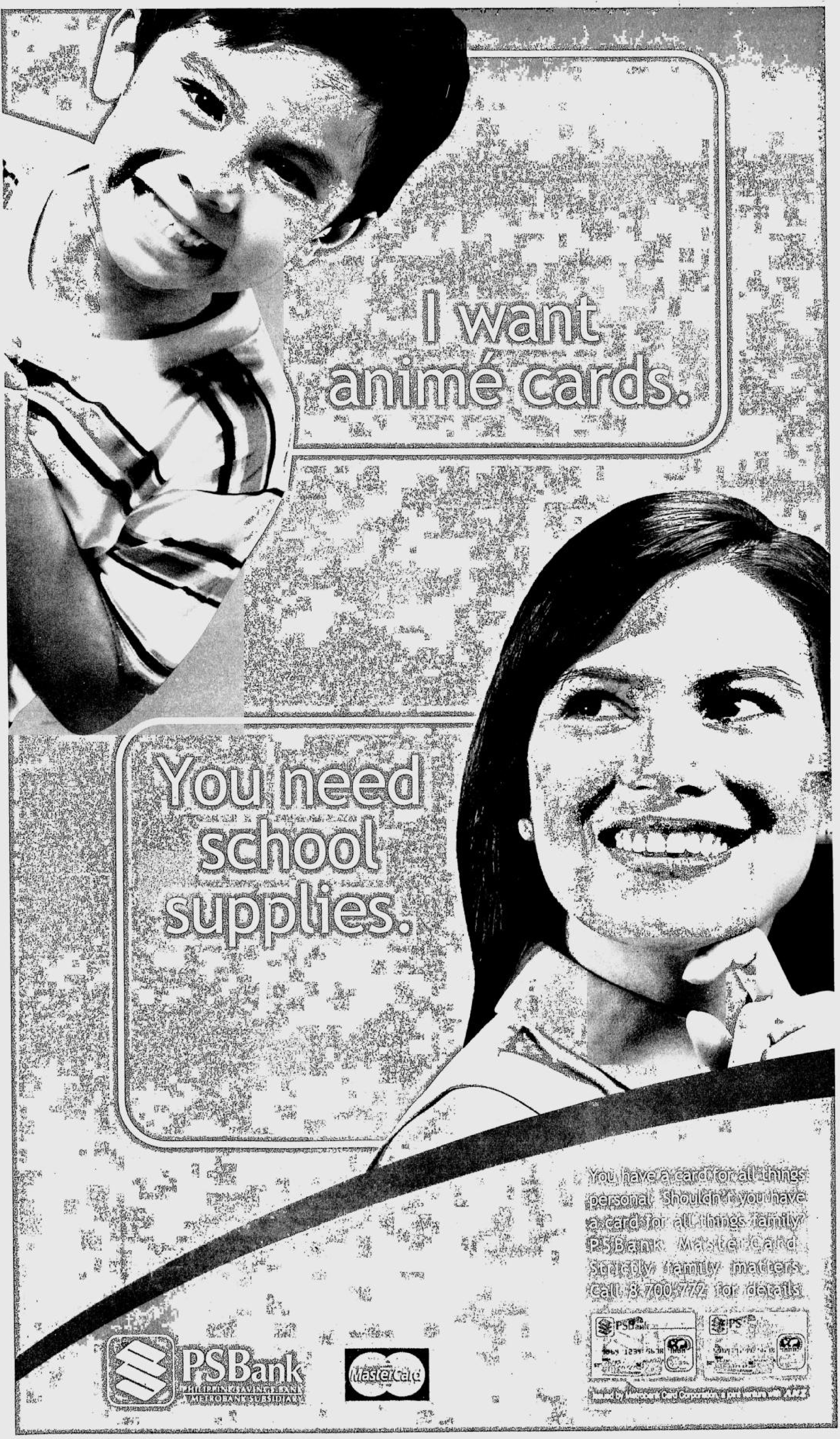
NFA sells two types of rice

THE NATIONAL Food Authority now sells two types of rice varieties, regular-milled (RMR) and well-milled (WMR), varieties to give consumers an option on price and rice quality. The RMR variety, is sold at P16 per kilogram (kg) and the upgraded well-milled rice (WMR) at P18 per kg. Both rice varieties may be bought at market outlets marked Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke (BGP), Tindahan ni Gloria sa Barangay (TGP) and other rice outlets accredited by the agency. Under the Palengke Watch program, NFA employees and officials make regular visits to the agency's accredited rice outlets to monitor the prices and supply of the staple. For more information on NFA programs, please send inquiries via text NFA through mobile number 0917-6210927. For more information on programs of the Department of Agriculture, please visit the DA's official website at www.da.gov.ph.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IT'S Dad's turn! /C3

LIFESTYLE

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Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS ● TUESDAY FITNESS ● WEDNESDAY 2 … URSDAY FOOD ● FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

DUNKIN' DONUTS
FREE doNuts FoR Kids 12 yEaRs old & bElow
JUNE 18
10 - 11 a.m. & 2 - 3 p.m.
PARTICIPATING OUTLETS ONLY
DUNKIN' DONUTS DAY!

Hooray for Humphrey!

Parallel 45 in Mandaluyong is the enchanting 'bouchon' type restaurant where chef Navarro makes his culinary dreams come true

CHEF Humphrey Navarro

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

THERE are things that you expect of certain people... Great art from Amorsolo, nationalistic poetry and prose from Rizal, music to fall in love with from Celerio, heavenly food from Navarro!

On July 15, all roads will lead to 871 Samat Street in Mandaluyong as chef Humphrey Navarro, opens P45 (Parallel 45). This is the culmination of all his dreams, a reflection of all that he is and an enchanting new home for us to experience the magic of Humphrey cuisine.

So, what is P45? It's a "bouchon" type of a restaurant and wine cellar that features classical cuisine done with modern flair or, simply put, twisted Humphrey style!

Since he narrated his menu to me, I've been as excited and sleepless as he is. Imagine these appetizers (which by the way, are mostly cooked four ways): Four Dances of Foie Gras, Diver Scallops four ways, Rock Lobster four ways, Tartare four ways, Caesar in a Basket with Duck Liver Croutons and, of course, the signature P45 dish, a pail of mixed shellfish with Chili Aioli.

Just the mere litany of his dessert offerings made my hips balloon two inches. Scharfen Berger Flourless Chocolate Pudding with Molten Peanut Butter is a must-try! On and on it goes, not one dish less exciting than the other.

Most of what's on the menu are dishes that have never been created before and are certain to satisfy even the most discriminating of palates. As if the news isn't hard enough to digest, there too will be tasting menus with wine for lunch, the dishes for which to depend on the freshest market produce for the day. Truly P45 is to dictate the new dining trend in Manila!

My dear Humphrey, through all the accolades, you've remained a "cook," as you so fondly refer to yourself, one who is full of heart and to me, ever so gentle, kind and humble of spirit. Know that I remain extremely happy for you and all you've achieved! I am pleased that you are soon to unveil yourself to the world, to create masterpieces that will allow everyone to experience the magnificence of your God-given gift. So I shall see you then, as I stand to be first in line, to enjoy excellent food and to celebrate the success of P45! Congratulations, my friend!

Most requested

Much as we love gourmet food, the voice of the heart screams for comfort food. So here are the answers to your requests.

The clamor for a Salpicao recipe has been equally as deafening as the clamor for the rollback of gasoline prices! The dish is perhaps the No. 1 most requested recipe on Kitchen Rescue. So Bong, Tom, Gretchen, Alex, Mrs. Cruz, Nora Aunor, etc. ... (okay, Nora Aunor is pushing it), here it is.

Salpicao

2 + 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1/3 c garlic, thinly sliced or chopped fine
1 dried chili or pinch of pepper flakes (optional)
250 g tenderloin (cubed ½ inch)
2 tsp Lea and Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
½ tsp salt, to taste
½ tsp pepper, freshly cracked, to taste

In a pan, heat up 2 tbsp olive oil, add garlic and chili. Cook garlic until golden! Remove garlic. Drain on paper towels, set aside. To garlic add a pinch of salt and pepper.

In the same pan, add another tablespoon of oil. Add beef and cook until it changes color. Add Worcestershire Sauce and season to taste.

Top beef with garlic, pour over pan drippings. Serve garnished with chopped flat leaf parsley.

Tips/options

Make sure garlic is chopped/sliced evenly to ensure that all morsels of garlic cook evenly and brown at the same time.

If using Ilokos garlic, cut quantity to half; native garlic is stronger in taste and flavor.

Do not burn garlic.

If you wish add 2 tsp Knorr seasoning, adjust to taste, after adding Worcestershire sauce.

If you can find sea salt, that would be great to season your beef with.

When beef changes color, just before it's done you may add a tbsp or so of butter. Mix to melt and blend!

Do this over high heat and in a hot pan. All you want is to sear the beef and not overcook it.

In the pan with the drippings add two cups of cooked cold rice, a few pieces of toasted garlic, a bit of olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Heat rice through, mixing to combine. Serve rice with beef.

Can I please have a recipe for kimchi and trembling Maja Blanca?

CERES

Don't really know what you mean by trembling. Hope this makes you tremble or, at least, tingle!

Tingle-ing Maja Blanca

3/4 c cornstarch
1 c white sugar
2 c coconut milk, first extraction
2 c carabaos milk
Zest of 2 pcs dayap

Combine in saucepan, mix until cornstarch dissolves.

Cast over heat whisking until mixture thickens.

Pour mixture into a dish or into molds.

Cool, top with *latik*.

You may add 1 cup sweet corn once mixture has thickened.

Kakang Gata

(First extraction of coconut milk from two coconuts)

In a saucepan, heat coconut milk mixing until oil is extracted and *latik* is formed.

For questions and comments text 0917-8399888.

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

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A Father's Day Celebration
at Robinsons Malls
June 19, 2005

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Debbie Jean Chua
SWI - PASIG

BEFORE		AFTER
45	CHEST	37
42	WAIST	30 1/2
47	ABDOMEN	32 1/2
14 1/2	R. ARM	10
14 1/2	L. ARM	10
27	R. THIGH	22
27	L. THIGH	22

To date, she has lost 53 inches.

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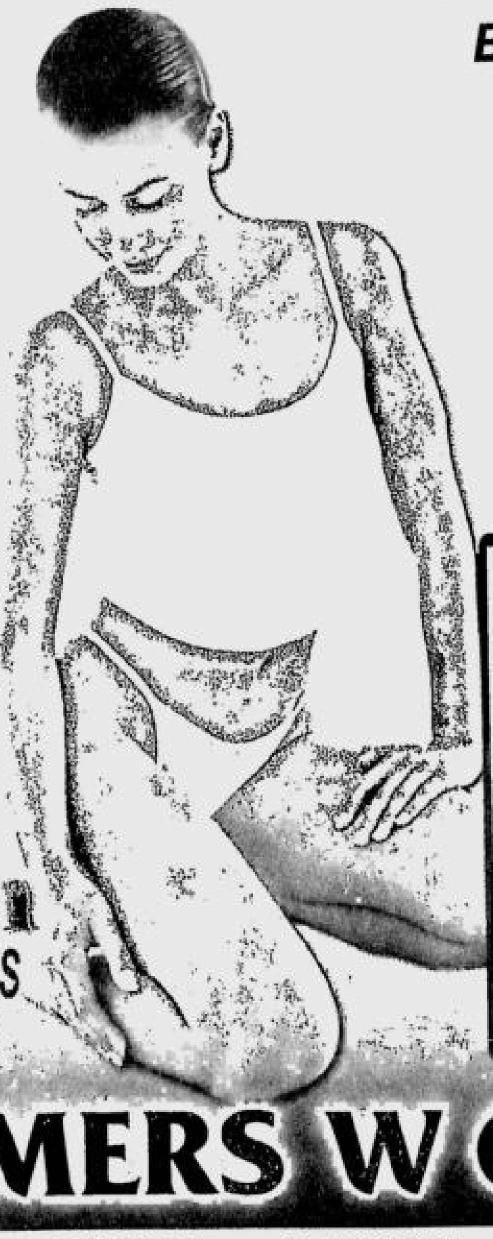

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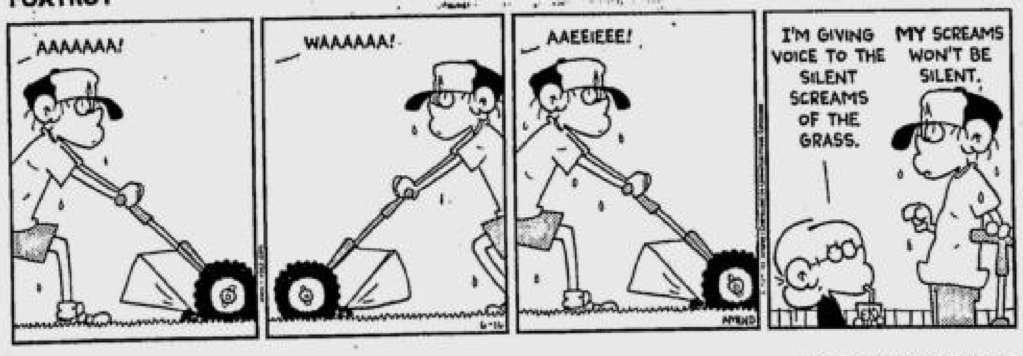
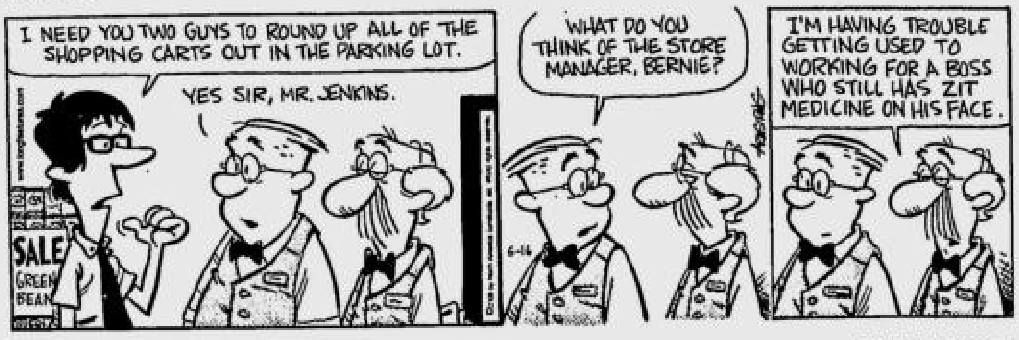
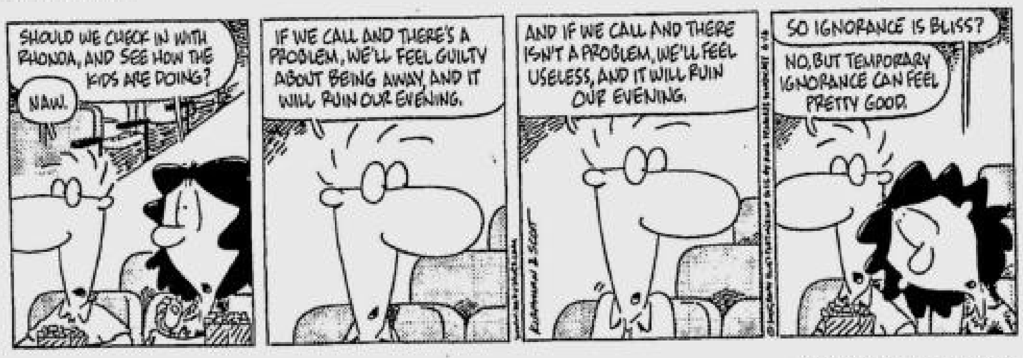
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


AAAAAAA!
WAAAAAA!
AAEEIEEE!
I'M GIVING VOICE TO THE SILENT SCREAMS OF THE GRASS.
MY SCREAMS WON'T BE SILENT.

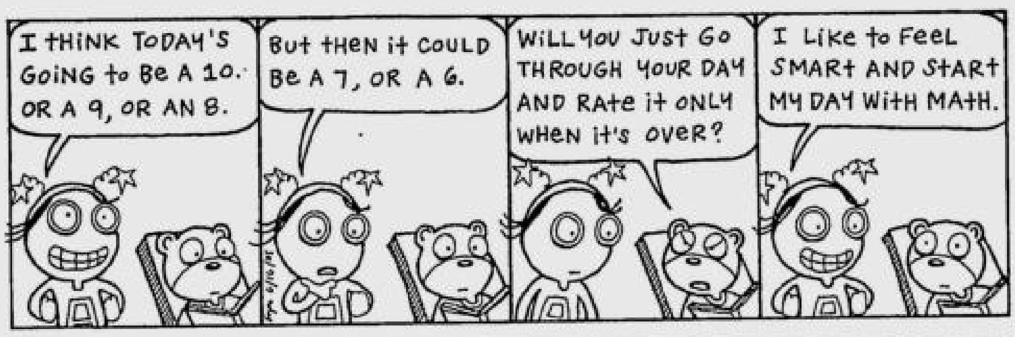
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I NEED YOU TWO GUYS TO ROUND UP ALL OF THE SHOPPING CARTS OUT IN THE PARKING LOT.
YES SIR, MR. JENKINS.
SALE GREEN BEAN
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE STORE MANAGER, BERNIE?
I'M HAVING TROUBLE GETTING USED TO WORKING FOR A BOSS WHO STILL HAS ZIT MEDICINE ON HIS FACE.

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


SHOULD WE CHECK IN WITH RHONDA, AND SEE HOW THE KIDS ARE DOING?
NAW.
IF WE CALL AND THERE'S A PROBLEM, WE'LL FEEL GUILTY ABOUT BEING AWAY, AND IT WILL RUIN OUR EVENING.
AND IF WE CALL AND THERE ISN'T A PROBLEM, WE'LL FEEL USELESS, AND IT WILL RUIN OUR EVENING.
SO IGNORANCE IS BLISS?
NO, BUT TEMPORARY IGNORANCE CAN FEEL PRETTY GOOD.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I THINK TODAY'S GOING TO BE A 10. OR A 9, OR AN 8.
But then it could be A 7, OR A 6.
Will you just go through your day and rate it only when it's over?
I Like to Feel SMART AND START MY DAY WITH MATH.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You plan and wait for what you want (and you want success). This is because you are future-oriented, and you are patient, not rash. You choose your friends with care. You like to have enough money and land to feel financially secure. In the year ahead, you'll focus on your closest relationships.
Birthdate of: Roberto Duran, boxer; Joyce Carol Oates, writer; Phil Mickelson, golfer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Unexpected events will happen at home today. Possibly, a family member will surprise you. Someone unusual could suddenly visit. Stock the fridge!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can expect to meet someone new today. This person might be a passing acquaintance, or this could be the beginning of a new friendship for you. This is an interesting encounter!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Unexpected purchases and spontaneous spending might excite you today. Unfortunately, you might also lose money. Changes to your cash flow are definitely likely! (Some might find money.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel alive and mentally awake today! All sorts of things fascinate you. This is an excellent day to tackle problems you've been unable to solve. New ideas pop into your mind like lightning.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel restless and active today. You want adventure. You want to do something different. You're also hungry to learn new things. This can be an exciting day for you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Conversations with others seem to be full of electricity today. You will definitely avoid boring people. You want to talk to stimulating individuals who open your mind to new ideas.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Bosses and parents surprise you today. Unexpected suggestions or instructions could catch you off-guard. On the other hand, exciting news might please you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day to learn anything new. Visit bookstores, libraries or educational institutions. Go someplace you've never been before. (You need the stimulation.)

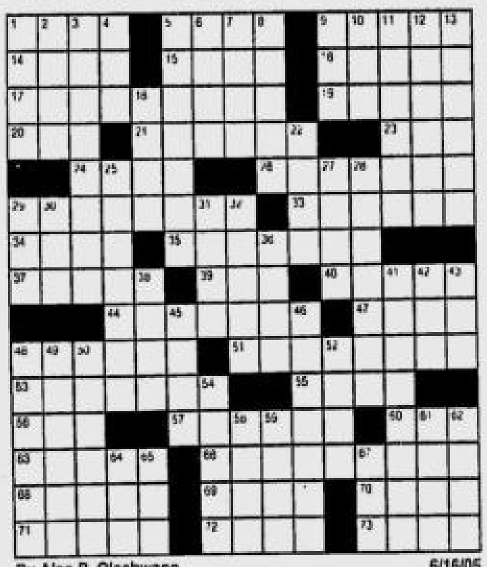
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Surprising news might come your way today. If not, unexpected news about favorable circumstances or a piece of good fortune that affects your partner will excite you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Conversations with partners or close friends will definitely take a surprising turn today. Something right out of the blue catches you off-guard. (It might even shock you.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): New technology on the job will certainly change things for you right now. You might also meet new co-workers. Something at work definitely surprises you today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): New love might be terribly exciting right now. Unexpected flirtations bring sizzle to your life. Quite likely, this occurs with someone who is different or unusual in some way.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

6/16/05

ACROSS
1 Fabricated
5 Thought provoking
9 Of a junction
14 Economist Greenspan
15 Earthenware crock
16 Long, thin ridge
17 Start of Josh Billing quote
19 Flowed out
20 Cadence count word
21 "__ Fideles"
23 Joplin piano piece
24 Thoroughly corrupt
26 Part 2 of quote
29 Sea cows
33 Eye parts
34 Pitcher Hershiser
35 Impassive
37 Phrygian king
39 Part 3 of quote
40 Bridge triumphs
44 More mean
47 Pelvic pieces
48 Frozen hanger
51 In a logical manner
53 Part 4 of quote
55 Arithmetic problems
56 Have dinner
57 Skim through
60 Golf score
63 Tip over
66 End of quote
68 Senior
69 Editor's directive
70 Corrosive stuff
71 Squalid
72 Billions of years
73 Take in text

DOWN
1 Meal mixture
2 __ vera
3 Attempted to soundproof
4 Vane dir.
5 Casual drawings
6 Fashion magazine
7 BPOE members
8 Noodles in Roma
9 Scot's negative
10 Sphere
11 Rubble
12 Relaxed
13 Rock shelves
18 __ accompli
22 Actor Stoltz
25 Ornamental drapery
27 Significant times
28 Playwright Shakespeare
29 May celebrant
30 Onassis, to pals
31 Coup d'__
32 Seattle pro
36 Conception
38 Casa part
41 Pimento
42 Wire measure
43 Utter
45 Eastern European
46 Winter apples
48 Matters in dispute
49 Pair
50 Deter
52 Plaintiff
54 Irregularly notched
58 Football great Graham
59 Say __!
61 Largest continent
62 Funnyman Foxx
64 Beatty or Rorem
65 Arid
67 Military science

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	P	A	S	■	S	C	A	M	P	■	A	C	T	S
P	E	S	T	■	A	S	T	O	R	■	P	E	R	T
I	N	T	E	R	N	A	L	R	E	V	E	N	U	E
C	U	R	A	T	E	■	■	R	P	I	■	S	S	T
E	R	O	D	E	■	S	U	I	■	S	H	O	T	S
S	Y	S	■	■	F	I	R	S	T	■	O	R	E	O
■	■	■	S	A	L	S	A	■	U	N	S	E	E	N
■	C	A	M	P	A	I	G	N	F	U	N	D	S	■
R	O	B	E	R	T	■	G	O	T	T	I	■	■	■
E	V	I	L	■	S	H	E	D	S	■	■	C	C	R
B	E	L	L	S	■	O	D	E	■	S	C	A	L	E
E	T	E	■	A	W	N	■	■	P	U	R	R	E	D
C	O	N	S	C	I	E	N	C	E	M	O	N	E	Y
C	U	E	S	■	F	S	T	O	P	■	C	A	S	E
A	S	S	N	■	E	T	H	O	S	■	S	L	E	D

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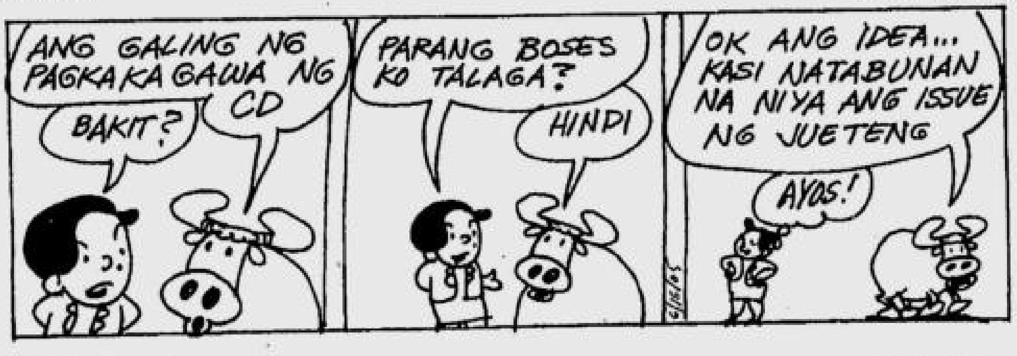
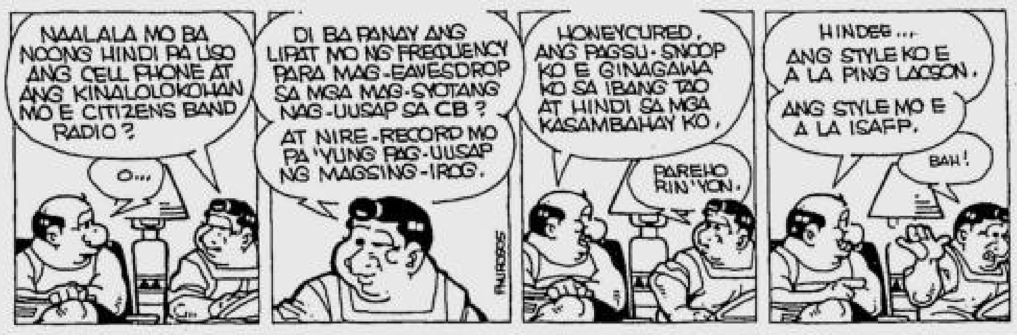
6/15/05

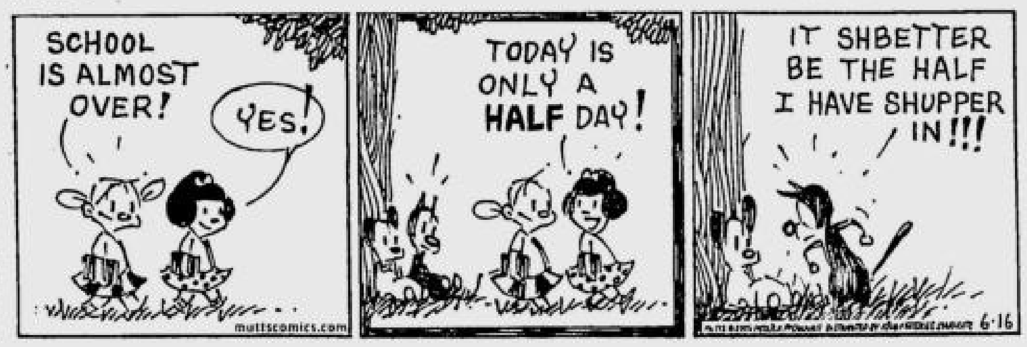
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ANG GALING NG PAGKAKAGAWA NG CD
BAKIT?
CD
PARANG BOSES KO TALAGA?
HINDI
OK ANG IDEA... KASI NATABUNAN NA NIYA ANG ISSUE NG JUETENG
AYOS!

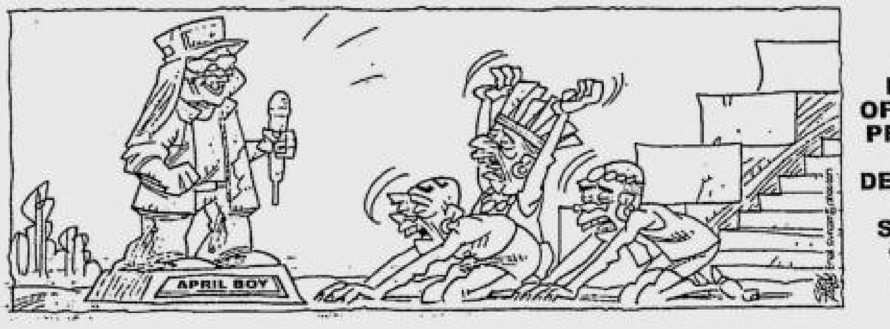
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAALALA MO BA NOONG HINDI PA USO ANG CELL PHONE AT ANG KINALOLOKOHAN MO E CITIZENS BAND RADIO?
O...
DI BA PANAY ANG LIPAT MO NG FREQUENCY PARA MAG-EAVESDROP SA MGA MAG-SYOTANG NAG-UUSAP SA CB?
AT NIRE-RECORD MO PA 'YUNG PAG-UUSAP NG MAGSING-IROG.
HONEYCURED. ANG PAGSU-SNOOP KO E GINAGAWA KO SA IBANG TAO AT HINDI SA MGA KASAMBAHAY KO.
PAREHO RIN 'YON.
HINDEE... ANG STYLE KO E A LA PING LACSON.
ANG STYLE MO E A LA ISAFP.
BAH!

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

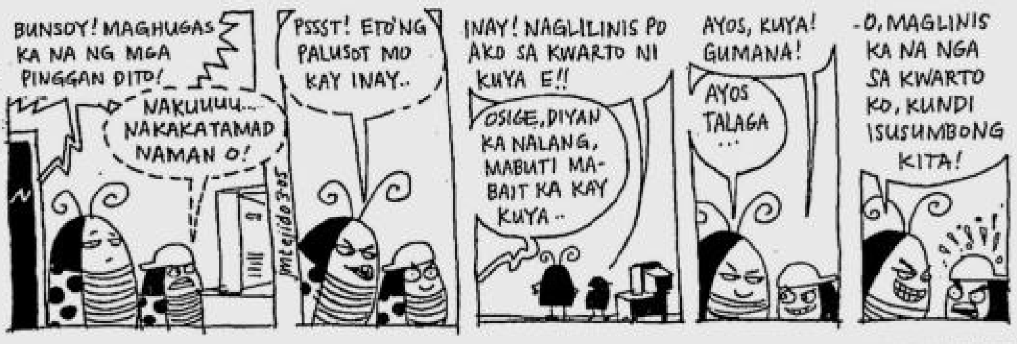

SCHOOL IS ALMOST OVER!
YES!
TODAY IS ONLY A HALF DAY!
IT SHBETTER BE THE HALF I HAVE SHUPPER IN!!!
muttscomics.com

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

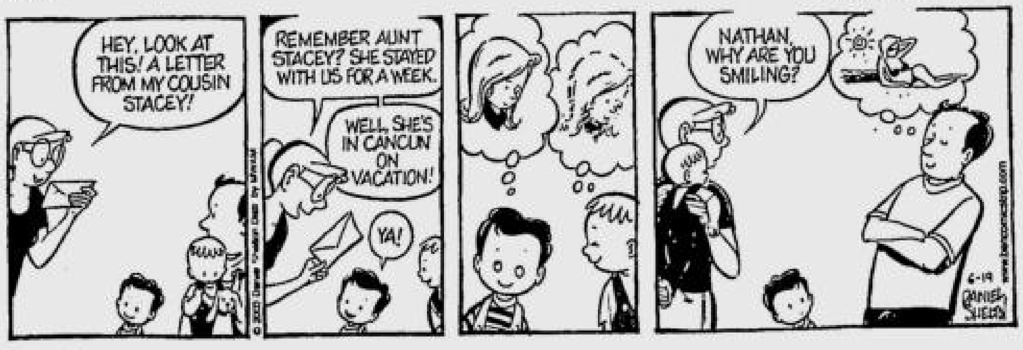


THE INCAS OFFERING PRAYERS AND DEVOTION TO A STATUE OF AN IDOL

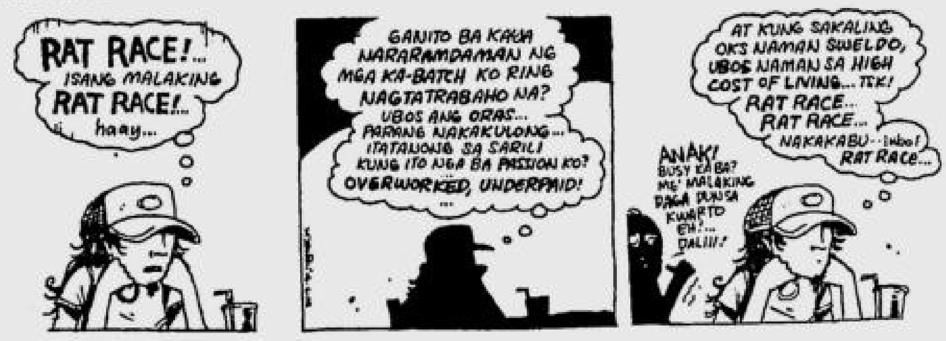
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUNSOY! MAGHUGAS KA NA NG MGA PINGGAN DITO!
NAKUUUU... NAKAKATAMAD NAMAN O!
PSSST! ETO'NG PALUSOT MO KAY INAY..
INAY! NAGLILINIS PO AKO SA KWARTO NI KUYA E!!
OSIGE, DIYAN KA NALANG, MABUTI MABAIT KA KAY KUYA..
AYOS, KUYA! GUMANA!
AYOS TALAGA ...
-O, MAGLINIS KA NA NGA SA KWARTO KO, KUNDI ISUSUMBONG KITA!

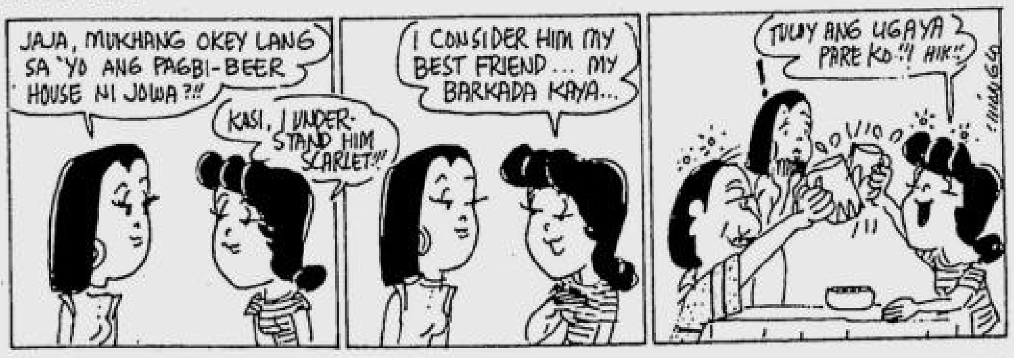
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


HEY, LOOK AT THIS! A LETTER FROM MY COUSIN STACEY!
REMEMBER AUNT STACEY? SHE STAYED WITH US FOR A WEEK.
WELL, SHE'S IN CANCUN ON VACATION!
YA!
NATHAN, WHY ARE YOU SMILING?

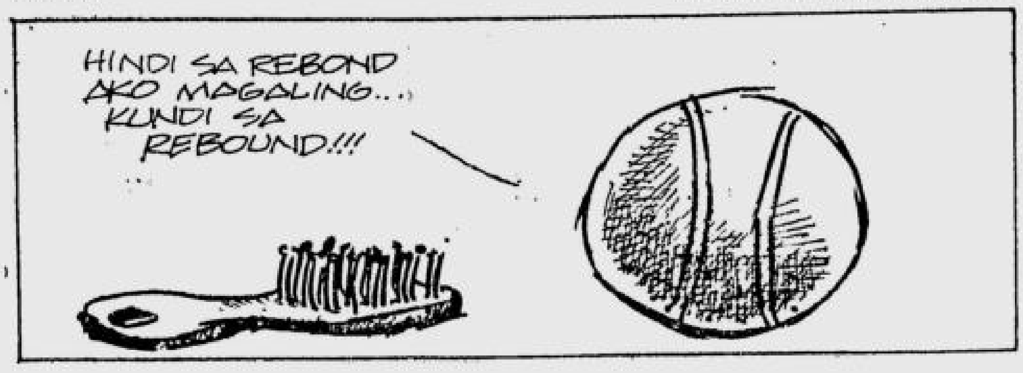
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


RAT RACE!... ISANG MALAKING RAT RACE!.. haay...
GANITO BA KAYA NARARAMDAMAN NG MGA KA-BATCH KO RING NAGTATRABAHO NA? UBOS ANG ORAS... PARANG NAKAKULONG... ITATANONG SA SARILI KUNG ITO NGA BA PASSION KO? OVERWORKED, UNDERPAID! ...
AT KUNG SAKALING OKS NAMAN SWELDO, UBOS NAMAN SA HIGH COST OF LIVING... TSK! RAT RACE... RAT RACE... NAKAKABU- -inbo! RAT RACE...
ANAK! BUSY KA BA? MAY MALAKING DAGA DUN SA KWARTO EH!... DALI!!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MUKHANG OKEY LANG SA 'YO ANG PAGBI-BEER HOUSE NI JOWA?!!
KASI, I UNDERSTAND HIM SCARLET!!
I CONSIDER HIM MY BEST FRIEND... MY BARKADA KAYA...
TULOY ANG UGAYA PARE KO!!! HIK!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HINDI SA REBOND AKO MAGALING... KUNDI SA REBOUND!!!

All-time favorites for Father's Day

BALUT a la Pobre

CABALEN, the eat-all-you-can, eat-all-you-want buffet restaurant, celebrates Father's Day with the all-time favorite selections of Sizzling Sisig, Sizzling Chicken, Balut a la Pobre and Bulalo with Mais.

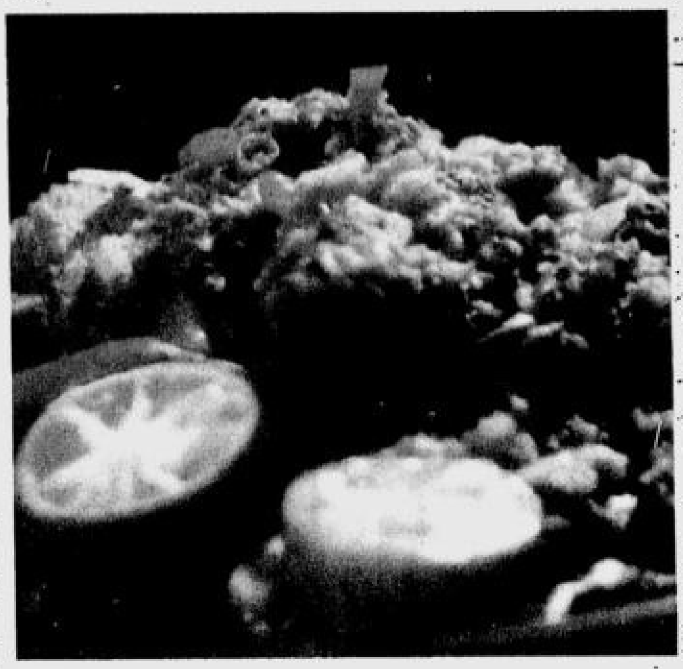
The all-day, all-night buffet spread of Cabalen, which includes a succulent *lechon* every day, is available for only P249 for adults and P105 for kids below 4 ft.

Cabalen also offers, with Body Worx Fitness Club in Quezon City, a health and wellness gift package that any father would enjoy.

Highlighting the occasion is a raffle draw with the winner enjoying a one-week unlimited use of Body Worx Spa and Fitness Club facilities. For a minimum of P500, a dad will get a raffle ticket on Father's Day. So make your dad feel special on Father's Day by treating him at any Cabalen branch.

For catering, call 9135522. Cabalen specializes in Filipino and Thai cuisine.

Cabalen branches are at West Avenue, QC (3723515); SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City (6331761); Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati City (8939884); Robinson's Place Ermita Manila (5367987); SM City North Edsa, QC (9291908); SM City Manila (5229055); Sta. Lucia East Grandmall, Cainta, Rizal (6826964); Village Square, Harrison Plaza, Manila (4003071) and Robinsons Starmills Pampanga (045-8752064).



SISIG

It's Dad's turn!

DINING OUT

ALL dads dining at El Cirkulo Restaurant on Father's Day will be treated to Warm Chocolate Truffle Cake with a Liquid Center. The restaurant's special menu for fathers and their loved ones includes Wagyu Flat Iron Steak with Yorkshire Pudding Popovers, Wagyu Corned Beef Pot Ao Feu, Rabo De Toro with Orange and Rosemary, Kurobuta Pork Chop with dried Cranberry Relish and Monkfish with Exotic Mushrooms with Tomato Marmalade, Hen of the Woods, Shimeji, and Eringi Mushrooms. Call 8102763.

MAKATI Shangri-La's Circles Event Café offers cold cuts and salads from the cold theater kitchen; crustacean favorites from the seafood theater kitchen; curry and Chinese dim sum at the Asian theater kitchen; steaks, pizzas and pasta from Western theater kitchen; and cakes, pastries and ice cream at dessert theater kitchen. Inagiku presents Utage lunch buffet of traditional Japanese dishes. Red features a special lunch menu of Red Shellfish Bowl, US Chilled Beef Steak and Valrhona Cake. Call 8138888.

KIMPURA honors the man of the house with a free plate of Unagi/Uni Sashimi (eel/sea urchin fresh raw seafood) with a minimum bill of P3,500. Kimpura is at Greenhills Shopping Center (beside Uni-Mart), San Juan (tel. 7218816 and 7218869) and 2/L Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City (8932307 and 8924456).

INTER-CONTINENTAL Manila's Prince Albert Rotisserie offers an a la carte menu which includes Pan-fried Duck Liver, Roasted Sea Scallops, Braised Sea Bass and Roasted US Rib Eye. Café Jeepney will have a buffet spread of international and Filipino dishes for lunch and dinner. Partake of a barbecue lunch buffet at the poolside. Dads availing of these dining treats will get a free glass of wine and a chance to pick a prize. Call 8159711.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko treats dad to sumptuous meals at its Asian specialty restaurants where he can also get the chance to win perks and freebies from Eureka Drive, BMW Lifestyle, Clark Hatch Fitness Center, and Marks and Spencer. Call 8673333.

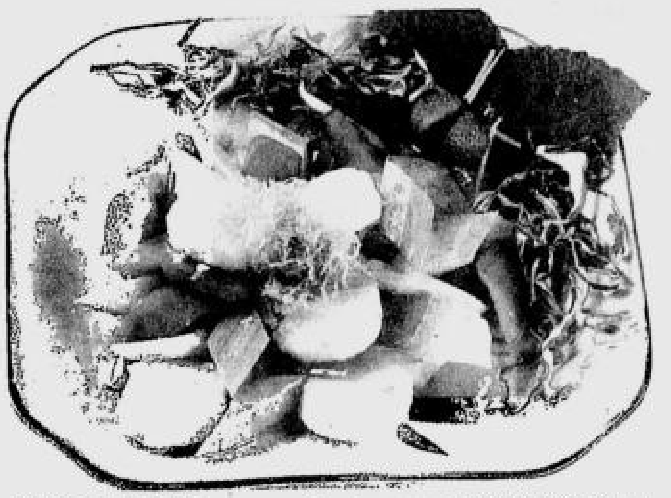
T.G.I.Friday's offers mouthwatering entrees and a wide selection of chicken, ribs, steak, seafood and desserts. There's the Double Glazed Grill and the free Jack Daniel's Glaze sauce. Check out its branches at Glorietta 3, Robinson's Manila, Hotel Rembrandt-Quezon City, Sta Lucia East and Alabang Town Center.

THE RICHMONDE Hotel's Richmonde Grill showcases appetizers, soup, main dish selections, desserts, carving station, salad bar, pasta station and Thai *halo-halo* station. All dads dining at the Grill also get a token and a chance to win gift certificates for complimentary use of the Health Club. Call 6387777.

OUTBACK presents dad's special weekend on June 18 and 19 at all its branches, with hot-off-the grill dishes like Prime Minister's Angus Prime Rib and other specialty pairings from the Wine Sampler Menu comprised of beef, lamb, chicken, seafood selection which he might want to have with Wolf Blass wines. A special apron for dad comes free from Outback and Wolf Blass. Outback Restaurants are in Alabang Town Center-Alabang (tel. 7721845); Glorietta 4, Makati City (7298458) and Libis (6343801).

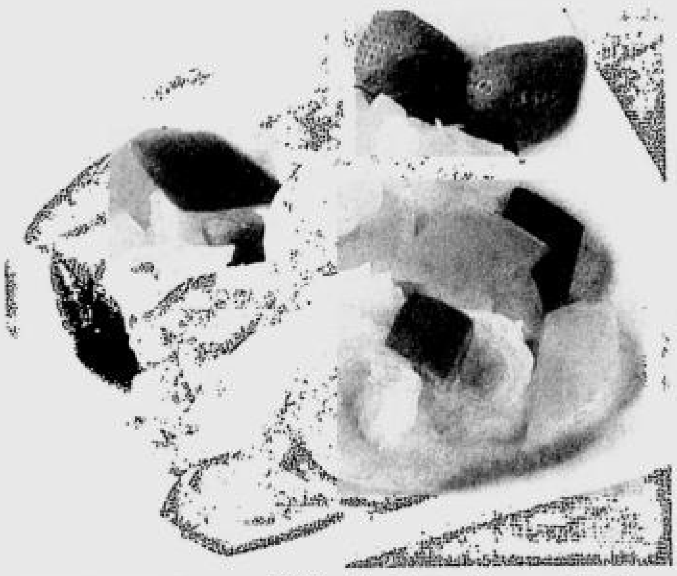
MANILA Pavilion Hotel offers Dad's Best Dinner at Rotisserie. The menu includes Smoked Salmon surprise with warm Mushroom Vinaigrette, Broccoli Cappuccino Soup with Toasted Almonds, Grilled Imported Beef Tenderloin with Black Label Whisky sauce, Country Fries, Asparagus Tips and Warm Apple Pie with Cinnamon Ice Cream. Café Coquilla's D-Day gives a free bottle of beer to all fathers. Call 5261212.

ITALIANNI'S celebrates Father's Day with its house specialties like Spinach and Artichoke Formaggio, Chicken Italianni's, Stuffed Mushrooms, Angel Hair Pomodoro and desserts. There are also new breakfast items at Greenbelt, Libis and Greenhills branches, available from 7-10 a.m. daily. On Father's Day, dad will get a Tuscan Bread box for free. Italianni's has branches at Greenhills, Libis, Glorietta 4, Alabang Town Center, SM City Bicutan, Greenbelt 2, Gateway Mall in Araneta Center and Tomas Morato, QC.



PEKING GARDEN has prepared a nine-course lauriat that includes sauteed fresh scallops with XO sauce. Peking Garden is at 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 8179066/9067.

PANTALAN Maynila Restaurant offers Filipino specials like Ensaladang Mangga at Litson, Pinakbet sa Gata, Paksiw na Pata, Balot a la Pobre and Pork Barbecue Spareribs this month. As a bonus, a group of 10 diners on June 19 gets a 10-percent discount on their total food bill. Pantalan is at the corner of South Road (TM Kalaw Ave.) and Parade St., Rizal Park, Ermita, Manila. Call 4004371, 5250514 or 4007439.



JADE GARDEN offers special dishes like Sauteed Prawns with tricolor peppers, all in one special set menu for 12 persons at P8,800. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 8124548 or 8922319.

SANBASHI Japanese Restaurant offers a 10-percent discount on its set lunches and dinner bento boxes. Bento lunches consisting of Unaju with Gomoku Udon (eel rice topping with hot *udon* noodle soup), Katsu (choice of pork or chicken cutlet), sushi, sashimi, *saba shio* (grilled mackerel), assorted tempura and *teppan* set lunches. Sanbashi is at the corner of South Road (TM Kalaw Ave.) and Parade St., Rizal Park, Ermita, Manila. Call 4006757, 4007439 or 5250514.

CHINESE Monk Casual Dining Restaurant presents Oriental Baby Back Ribs, Braised Beef, Seafood Noodles, Sweet and Sour Pork, Fish and Tofu Hotpot on Father's Day. For every P1,000 worth of food and drinks purchase, dad will receive key chains, ad cubes, aprons, mini Tabasco and P250 worth of gift certificate from Chinese Monk. The restaurant is at G/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati. Call 8974129.

BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant offers T-Bone Steak, Steak Al Ajillo, Rib-Eye Steak, Oklahoma-Style Grilled Baby Back Ribs, Seafood Linguini, New A'wlin's Platter and Seafood Caesar Salad. For every P1,000 worth of food and beverage purchase, dad gets a gift. Burgoo is on Tomas Morato Extension, South Triangle, Diliman, QC; at 2/L, The Podium, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong; 3/L, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati; The Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan; and Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, QC. Call 9277424, 6875254 or 8981815.

CRAVINGS serves Grilled Salmon Fillet with Creamy Basil Arugula Penne Pasta; Mixed Grill of Beef, Chicken and Country Sausage with Java Rice and Honey Barbecue Sauce; Katsudon Style Tilapia Fillet with Squash and Crabfat Cream Sauce; and Grilled Pepper Crusted Steak with Gravy. All dad diners will be given token gifts while for every order of the special set menu, they will get special prizes from Premier Wines and Spirits, Inc. Cravings is at Katipunan, Metrowalk-Ortigas, Tomas Morato, Shangri-La Mall, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, Fraser Place Serviced Residence, Festival Mall and West Avenue. Call 6891111.

SUPER Bowl of China serves dim sums, roasts, congees and other favorites like Crispy Noodles with Assorted Seafood; Szechuan Prawns; Deep-fried Cuttlefish; Beef Fillet Chinese-style; Lapu-Lapu Fillet with Taosi Sauce, etc. As a Father's Day treat, each branch of Super Bowl of China is raffling off a Wilson Badminton set to one very lucky dad. A minimum receipt of P1,500 entitles dad to a raffle ticket. Super Bowl of China has branches at SM Megamall; on Jupiter Street, Makati; at Glorietta 4; Chefs Avenue in Festival Mall, Alabang; 2/L of SM City North Edsa; Eastwood City Walk 2, Libis; G/F SM City Fairview; The Promenade in Greenhills; 3/L Gateway Mall, Araneta Center; and Bluewave, Marikina.

THE LEGEND Villas offers special Father's Day package which includes welcome drinks, a family-style breakfast and complimentary massage for Dads. The hotel's coffeeshop, Lola Maria, serves special grilled items for lunch and dinner including Barbecue Chicken, Pork Tenderloin, Garlic Chicken, Beef Tenderloin, Baby Back Ribs, Tuna Steak and Salmon Belly. The Legend Villas is along Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong. Call 6331501 to 10.

OODY'S Rice Noodles 'N Bar serves Fried Catfish with Mango Salad, Roasted Duck Curry and Chicken Pandan. All dad diners will get a free glass of Rene Barbier Wines plus a health and wellness gift package courtesy of Body Worx Fitness Club in Quezon City. Wine Gift Pack from Rene Barbier will be given away in a raffle draw. A minimum bill of P300 entitles dads to a raffle ticket. Oody's is at Greenbelt 3, Makati City, (tel. 7574258/59); Robinsons Galleria, Mandaluyong City, (6365497/98); Robinsons Place, Ermita, Manila (5361102).

CHILI'S coffee mug will be given to dads who will dine in at all its branches. This month, Chili's introduces Steak and Onion with crispy onion strings, Pueblo rice and fresh veggies. Top off with Strawberry Chocolate Cake. Chili's branches are located at Missouri cor. Nevada Sts. in Northeast Greenhills; Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati; and Tomas Morato cor. Scout Fernandez Sts., QC.

BLUE Bay Buffet By the Bay Restaurant presents Filipino, Chinese and international dishes. The spread also features live cooking stations offering barbecues, Mongolian grill and desserts. As a special treat, the oldest dad dining with their families on June 19 will dine free. Blue Bay Restaurant is at the corner of South Road (TM Kalaw Avenue) and Parade St., Rizal Park, Ermita, Manila. Call 4007439, 5250514 or 4007437.

MANILA Diamond Hotel celebrates Farther's Day with a special buffet spread. For every group of four persons availing of the buffet, fathers get to dine for free. Lunch and dinner buffet will be served at 950+ per person. Call 5283000 or 5262255.

Fiesta marks village market's 1st anniversary

THE SALCEDO Community Market—Makati's first neighborhood weekend market—celebrates an immensely successful first year on June 18 with a one-day fiesta.

The fiesta kicks off with marching band and *ati-atihan* dancers at 7 a.m., to be followed by a series of *rondalla* ensembles throughout the day. Musicians playing the *angklung* will put on a special show at around 10 a.m.

Market hours have been extended for the day, opening at 6 a.m. and closing at 4 p.m.

There will be raffles throughout the day in between the live entertainment. Concessionaires will also prepare special "freebies" and discounts at their own tables.

Brgy. Capt. Constancia Q. Lichauco noted that the market draws in residents of all four phases of Bel-Air Village and Salcedo Village and their guests. She attributes the market's success to the Bel-Air Youth, headed by Marc Medina, Tricia Lichauco, Anay Zalamea, Mia Villanueva, Lisa Periquet and Trickie Lopa, who voluntarily takes care of the tedious details of running the market every Saturday.

GET discounts and freebies from concessionaires at the Salcedo Community Market's first anniversary celebration.

Cooking class for dads and their kids

IN LINE with Father's Day, "Dad and I want to be Chefs" is the theme of the next Peninsula Academy Cooking Class, when executive chef Gerhard Doll and his team will teach young apprentice chefs and their dads Cooking Basics 101 on June 18, 9 a.m.-12 noon, at the Old Manila Kitchen.

The Peninsula chefs will conduct a three-hour hands-on cooking class for kids and their dads, at the end of which the novice chefs will serve their dads a gourmet meal.

Chef Gerhard will demonstrate how to make a summer salad of chicken, baby shrimps and citrus fruits with yoghurt-cumin dressing. Chef Michele Mingozzi of Mi Piace will show how home-made pasta is done and he will also share recipes of traditional sauces. Old Manila chef de Cuisine Tobias Gensheimer will cook peppered tuna fillet, warm potato and bean salad in tomato vinaigrette. Pastry chef Bernd Beitmann will whip up an easy-bake chocolate brownie with vanilla ice cream.

Cost per person is P2,750 (fathers) and P1,375 (children 6-12 years), inclusive of The Peninsula Academy Cooking Class, a three-course lunch, Peninsula Academy apron and a special gift.

Only 15 slots are available.
Call 8872888 local 2205.

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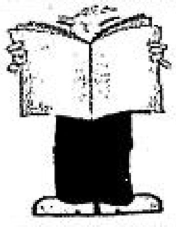

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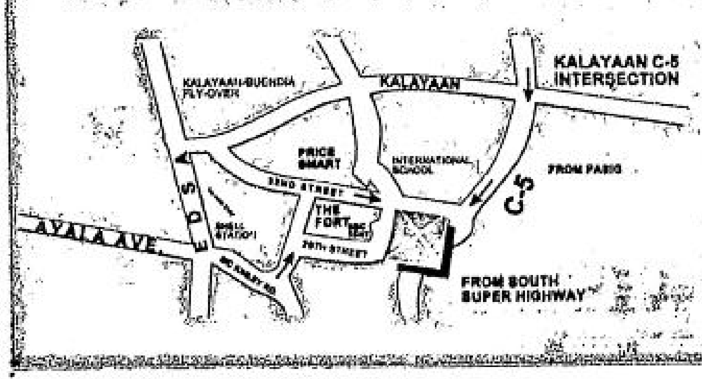
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